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The Turning of the Tide

THE STORY OF AN AMBITIOUS WOMAN

By Florence Stacpoole

CHAPTER I

"BEATIE, dearest, don't! Don't cry so, dear—it unnerves me, and I want you to help me, love!"

These words had a magical effect, for Beatrice's sobs stopped, and about a minute afterward she could speak calmly.

"Poor Eric! Poor, dear Eric! With your examination before you, and starting at six in the morning, too! What a selfish, selfish creature I am!"

Eric took the soft little hand that lay on his arm and kissed it.

"My darling, you are not selfish—don't say that! No wonder you feel as you do, for the affair has been very sudden."

These two young people were walking on the short, soft grass of a little lawn which was in front of an old-fashioned, pretty country house. The air of the May evening was sweet with the breath of the hawthorn hedges surrounding the lawn and separating it from the garden and fields that lay around the dwelling, and an unseen nightingale's song was the only sound that broke the stillness when Eric's voice ceased. But before he had time to resume he and his companion were startled by hearing a woman's shrill tones coming from the porch of the pretty villa.

"Beatrice! Beatrice! Where on earth are you? Come in this instant!"

◆

Eric drew the girl's arm within his, and, turning toward the house, they met a plain little person, in a brown serge gown, coming forward to meet them.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself, walking about at this hour of the evening with a young man!" she exclaimed.

Eric burst into a hearty, good-humored laugh.

"I think it is pleasanter for her than walking about without a young man!" he cried. "But, my dear Miss Steet, there's not the slightest reason for you to be shocked. We are engaged! We became engaged an hour ago, and the reason why we have stayed strolling about here so late, instead of coming in and sitting in the drawing-room, is that I've been trying to convince Beatrice that we must be married in three weeks. I want to speak to Mr. Burton about it."

The person in the brown serge dress gave a convulsive gasp, and her swarthy, sallow face turned very pale, but it was not noticeable in the dusk. She did not speak for a few moments; then, recovering herself, she said, not so shrilly, but much more viciously than before:

"Well, you can't see grandpapa to-night—he has gone to bed; you'll have to wait till to-morrow!"

"To-morrow!" exclaimed the young man blankly. "To-morrow! But I'm going away in the morning by the six o'clock train!"

"That's not my fault—you should have come in sooner! But the postman's not going away, I suppose?" and the next moment, with an indignant sniff, the young lady addressed as Miss Steet had vanished into the house.

"Yes, I must write, love," said Eric, taking his sweetheart's hand in his again. "I must explain everything to your grandfather—that the practice would have been snapped up if I had not secured it at once, even before I was qualified, and that you are willing to stand by me in the first bit of the stiff pull up the hill until the fees come rolling in. There will be nothing to fear, dear, because you'll be by my side—won't you, dear?" he rattled on enthusiastically.

As Beatrice did not speak he continued:

"You've decided, dearest, haven't you, that it's better for us to be married in three weeks' time than to have to wait months and months before there's a chance of our seeing each other again—you down here with 'dear Cousin Harriet'"—and he laughed as he mimicked Miss Steet's shrill treble—"and I up there, facing my strange patients, and living in my new house all alone? Only think, Beatie, it is May now! Well, before we should see each other again—that is, if I settle in Birmingham alone on the first of June—there would be June, July, August, September, October, Nov——"

"Oh, stop—stop, Eric! I could not bear it!" ejaculated the girl, quite overcome by the prospect. "I could not live all through the long summer and autumn——"

"And winter, too, without seeing me!" interrupted Eric triumphantly. "And how could I live without seeing you, my darling? No, no—we could not do it. You'll be my wife this day three weeks! It's settled, remember, with your grandfather's consent or without it! But—I'll write and ask for it, as it would be only proper to obtain it!"

"Ah," sighed Beatrice, "I don't suppose there'll be so much trouble to get it now as there would have been this time last year!"

"Before 'dearest Harriet' came?" inquired Eric.

"Yes," assented Beatrice. "I was all in all to grandpapa, Eric, till this time last year; and now Harriet is everything to him—everything! He won't mind in the least my leaving him!"

"Well, you're going to be all in all to me now! It's much more convenient as it is, for it would have been awful for me if he had wanted to keep you with him. There's one thing—he won't find any one troubling him to take Miss Harriet off his hands. But I am afraid he'll think me a very bad match for you, love. I'm not a very great catch, I know!" murmured the young man.

Just then Beatrice interrupted him by putting her hand on his lips.

"Don't," she implored—"don't let us talk about money! I am tired of hearing about it, for Harriet talks of hardly anything else all day long. Don't let us spoil this evening, especially, by doing so!"

■

The city was hot, stifling and dusty as Eric Kenlis trudged every day from his lodgings in a quiet street to the College of Surgeons, where he was undergoing an examination previous to becoming qualified to act as a medical practitioner.

Eric was not uneasy on the score of not passing, for he felt pretty confident that he would do so. He was well up in his work, so it was not any doubt on that point that made his heart sink occasionally, as he diverted his attention now and again from abstruse physiological questions to his own private affairs.

Nor was it any qualm as to his biological or anatomical knowledge that made him uneasy, which he certainly was pretty frequently; his disquietude came from the same plain, prosaic and unpoetical cause which has worried millions of lovers since banking-accounts first came into existence. Indeed, Eric's balance at his banker's was not of quite the amount which would really warrant a young medical man in plunging recklessly into matrimony with a girl who did not possess sixpence of her own.

His financial position was this—he had signed a check for the purchase of a practice in Birmingham, and when his examination fees were paid the exact amount remaining to his credit at Messrs. Goldsworthy's bank would be a few hundred dollars only.

"Don't let us talk about money!" Beatrice had said on that sweet evening when the two had wandered together by the hawthorn hedges; nevertheless, he could not help thinking about it.

"What's the matter, old man?"

The speaker was another student, also up for his examination. They had known each other in hospital days, and Gregory Hardcastle and Eric Kenlis had been great chums.

"Oh, my thoughts weren't exactly unpleasant!" returned Eric, with a little laugh.

"A girl? I thought as much!" remarked the astute Gregory. "But there's something else, I can tell by the look of your face!"

"Yes, there is," admitted Eric. "You are right, as usual, Gregory. Well, to begin with, I'm engaged!"

"I'm not surprised to hear it. You're not the fellow to be in love long without clinching the matter. You always were too impulsive, old boy."

"I think you might give me your congratulations first and the lecture after," remarked Eric.

"That's true," responded his friend. "I'm afraid I was rather rude. Well, I congratulate you heartily, old man, and the young lady, too, as far as that goes!"

"That's a very pretty compliment, Gregory; it quite takes away the sting of the lecture you were beginning. Thank you very much!"

"Well, go on with the sequel," urged Hardcastle. "The engagement was only the first part of the story."

"And the best part, too!" ejaculated Eric. "Well, I've bought a practice, too!"

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Gregory. "You take my breath away! A practice! Before you have got your diploma! This is impetuosity with a vengeance! I must have something to settle my nerves after that," he remarked, lighting a cigar. "If you'll take one, my boy"—handing Eric the case—"it will soothe the system, and enable you the better to tell the story. And where is the practice?" continued Hardcastle.

"In Birmingham," replied Eric.

◆

Gregory made a grimace as he asked, after a moment's silence:

"How much did you give for it?"

"Oh, I think I've got a bargain—twenty-five hundred dollars."

"You've seen the books, of course?"

"No—no," said Eric hesitatingly. "I have not."

"You haven't! But why didn't you make the fellow show them when you inspected the place? You should have looked to the takings before anything else."

"But I haven't inspected the place! In fact, I've never been in Birmingham!"

"Good gracious!" cried young Hardcastle. "Are you a born idiot, Eric? You're not serious, surely?"

He looked so astonished that Eric's uneasiness, which before had been vague, began to assume a more definite form; but he replied firmly:

"If I had waited till I had seen the place and inspected the books, I should probably have lost the chance of it, and most likely have lost my examination, too!"

"How so?" asked Gregory, who had actually let his cigar go out; his anxiety for his friend had made him forget even the delights of good tobacco.

"Well, the way it happened was this," proceeded Eric, drawing intricate geometrical designs with the ferrule of his walking-stick on the gravel at his feet. "About a fortnight ago I saw the advertisement regarding the practice, and wrote about it. The holder is in bad health, and sent word back that it brought in over twenty-five hundred dollars a year, and was worth eight thousand dollars, but that he'd take twenty-five hundred dollars from an immediate purchaser if he could get one."

"So you agreed?" queried Hardcastle.

"Yes," replied Kenlis.

"And paid cash down?"

"I sent off the check the next day. Well, my dear fellow," Eric continued deprecatingly, as Gregory's face looked anything but encouraging, "if I had not made up my mind at once, the other fellow would have got the practice. If I had gone to Birmingham to inspect the books, my reading would have been thrown out of gear. If I had kept the money, I might have been tempted into spending some of it, and, once I had done that, all hope, for this year at least, would have been over."

"All hope of what?" asked Gregory, though he knew pretty well what the answer would be.

"Well—of getting married this year," answered Eric, a little shamefacedly.

"Ah, that's it! Well, humph! I suppose I must congratulate you! You've got through a lot of work in a short time at all events—that's more than every one can say!"

Gregory did not like to question his friend too closely as to his private affairs, but he would have liked to ask if the girl had money, who she was, and so forth.

"When is it to be?" he inquired presently.

"'It'? What do you mean?" Kenlis demanded, reddening a little.

"Your wedding, of course!"

"Oh, in about three weeks."

Gregory Hardcastle threw up his hands in amazement.

"I always said you were the most reckless, impetuous fellow I ever met. Come on! I don't know whether love takes your appetite away, but I need something to eat at once." And he strode off.

■

More than two hundred years ago the well-known lines were written:

> "Heaven has no rage like love to hatred turned,
> Nor hell a fury like a woman scorned,"

and the words are as true of the women of the nineteenth as they were of those of the seventeenth century.

Miss Harriet Steet had not been scorned; indeed, the man upon whom she had set her love was not even aware of that fact. But the affection she undoubtedly bore Eric turned to virulent hatred when she found that he, whom she had endeavored to attract by various smiles and graces, had not only been utterly oblivious of them, but had actually engaged himself to a minx of seventeen! That the "minx" was her own cousin made no difference, unless in the way of making her hatred more bitter.

Beatrice Somerville had always been a source of irritation to Miss Steet. Beatrice's pretty face vexed that young lady vastly; so did Miss Somerville's blue and white muslin gowns, as serge would, Harriet argued, have been more useful and would never want washing. Even the plain, coarse straw hats Beatrice wore—and they were as plain and coarse as they well could be—were an eyesore and an abomination to Miss Steet, for under them her cousin's fair face looked so innocent.

For twelve months Harriet Steet had been keeping house for her grandfather. Before that time she had seen little and thought less of him, and Mr. Burton's domestic arrangements had been managed partly by an old servant, Marjory, and partly by Beatrice, who had lived with him since her babyhood, when she had been left in his charge by her dying mother, herself a young widow.

In all these years Miss Steet's family had thought little of old Mr. Burton. He was a commonplace man, being only a retired contractor, and their status, in the eyes of their neighbors, was not raised by the relationship. He was living in a dull, out-of-the-world place, on a small annuity, which died with him. This probably was the most uninteresting fact about him, for, living as he did, he would have nothing in the shape of money to leave behind him. So neither old Mr. Burton nor Beatrice Somerville was taken any notice of by the nearest relatives that they had in the world.

◆

A sudden change, however, came over the aspect of affairs.

"John Burton's two sons have just been killed in a railway accident in Santiago!" exclaimed Mr. Thomas Steet, Harriet's father—a struggling solicitor in a small county town—one morning.

He had been reading the newspaper to himself while at breakfast—indeed, he literally devoured it with his toast, coffee and eggs—quite undisturbed by the cackle which Harriet and her sisters and mother kept up all the time.

"Dear me! How awful!" ejaculated Mrs. Steet.

"How shocking!" "Poor fellows!" and "When did it happen?"

Such were the observations that fell from the lips of Harriet's sisters, but she herself

was silent. Nevertheless, she thought more of the matter than the others.

That day she paid a visit to the village where her grandfather lived—ostensibly to condole with him on the death of the two nephews whom probably he had never seen, but who were deplored by Harriet in the most dutiful manner, as if their loss was felt and their uncle was in need of consolation.

♦

CHAPTER II

THE result of Harriet's journey was an invitation to stay for a few days, which Mr. Burton gave without the least suspicion that it had been planned by his wily granddaughter. Her stay was prolonged, as such visits sometimes are, indefinitely, until, after a few months, Miss Steet had become so indispensable to the old gentleman that the idea of her going away would have been regarded by him with as much dread as if some one had proposed to remove the mahogany four-post bedstead, hung with chintz blazing with cabbage-roses and sunflowers, in which he had slept every night for very nearly half a century.

Miss Steet was a good reader, a capital cook, an economical housekeeper—had everything, in fact, to recommend her, except an equable temper and an amiable disposition. Harriet's ability in reading aloud was particularly prized by the old gentleman, because for some months his eyesight had been failing rapidly.

This life—ministering to the whims of, and keeping house for, a retired contractor of small means in a small country village—was dull, besides being undignified. There are, however, things which can support people through the dullest and most undignified lives. Love is one of them, and money-making is another.

Now, Harriet had, previous to Beatrice's engagement, been solaced by both these particular consolations. She had fallen as deeply in love with the handsome Eric Kenlis as her small mind and shallow, hard nature would allow her to do. She saw him every week when he came over to the village from the county town where he lived, and for a long time her vanity had blinded her to the fact that his visits were not paid for her sake. The other hope—that of acquiring money—was hers also, and this remained, even after all idea of securing Eric had flown.

♦

It must not be supposed that Miss Steet was offered, or would have accepted, money as payment for her many services to her grandparent. She had as great a horror as many another of receiving wages, the receipt of which she would have considered lowering to herself and her family for all time. Nevertheless, the prospect of cash in the future bore her up during many a long day of that peculiar dullness known only in villages far removed from railway stations.

The money she craved should come to her in direct succession from her grandfather—not the miserable scrapings that might be saved from his annuity—but the very considerable wealth that was pretty sure to accrue to him from his brother in Santiago, whose only children had been swept away at one stroke when the terrible railway accident happened.

This man was older than Mr. Burton, who, of course, was now his direct heir, there being no other brother nor sister. Though living in a distant land, John Burton had always been on affectionate terms with Robert, the contractor, and Miss Steet thought that the former would be very likely to succumb first—"climate, age, shock of bereavement, and all things considered," as she argued to herself—and would be almost certain to leave everything he possibly could to the companion of his boyhood.

All these surmises Miss Steet kept to herself, locked in her own breast. In fact, no one knew as much of the matter as she did, because some years before she had taken the trouble to find out, from a schoolgirl friend who had gone to live in Santiago, all about her granduncle there. She had actually caused this young woman to make inquiries through her husband, who was in business, as to Mr. John Burton's wealth, and had discovered that his sons would inherit all his property, that the old gentleman cared not a straw for any of his relatives except his brother Robert, and that of him he always spoke with affection.

♦

Now, of course, everything was changed, as far as the property was concerned. The contractor, if he lived only long enough, would be wealthy—very wealthy, perhaps. Harriet grasped the situation in an instant when she heard of the accident to his nephews, but no one would have guessed from her face or manner that she had any special knowledge—least of all, her own family, from whom she had carefully concealed her inquiries, and to whom she never gave the slightest hint that her grandfather had become a person worth studying.

Probably her mother and sisters also concealed the secret satisfaction they felt at what they considered her new whim of going to stop with that "tiresome, under-bred old man," as they termed Mr. Robert Burton.

Eric successfully passed his examination and graduated a doctor, but he was not in good humor. He had received a letter from Beatrice just before his fate at the college was known, which had disturbed him and spoiled his triumph. The note was very short, but it entreated him not to compel her to marry without her grandfather's consent.

"I never, never could feel happy if I went away without grandpapa's knowledge or leave, and that I should have to do if we married without his consent," was the tenor of the missive.

Now, since his conversation with Hardcastle, Eric had been feeling more and more certain that he had "played the fool" in handing over, without inquiries of any kind, all his capital in such a hurry to a stranger. He was so thoroughly honorable and sincere himself that he had accepted all the unknown doctor's statements as literal and absolute facts.

"I will write a complete and plain statement of my affairs to Mr. Burton," he said to himself, when he had got rid of Hardcastle, and was alone in his little sitting-room.

"I won't begin our married life with any lies or hypocrisy," he thought. "I'll write to Mr. Burton and tell him everything."

♦

Eric sighed, and then could not keep from smiling at a certain element of absurdity which seemed to be in the situation. He could afford to smile, because in his heart he knew that Beatrice's love for him was as true and deep as his for her, and that, once he was with her again, he would very soon put all her hesitation to flight, and marry her in spite of all opposition.

"It's not as if there was any doubt about my being able to keep her comfortably," he reasoned to himself; "but, of course, parents and guardians want to see black and white for everything, and the old gentleman may say, even more forcibly than Gregory, that I've been a fool. But here goes!"

There was an old blotting-book on the shaky walnut-wood table that stood in the window of the room. He opened it, but there was no blotting-paper in it.

Eric had paper and envelopes at hand, and, resolving to write only on one side of the paper and let each sheet dry before folding it, he commenced the momentous communication:

"300 West Broad Street.

"*My Dear Mr. Burton:*—I am sure you will be glad to hear my examination is over, and that I have passed it satisfactorily and taken my medical degree. I write at once to tell you this fact, as it is very closely connected with another in which all the happiness of my life is bound up. I feel sure you have long known that I love your dear granddaughter, Beatrice, with a love the strength of which you, who know her so well, can guess. She has accepted me, but I need hardly say that we want your consent to our marriage, and I hope that you will not refuse it. I will state in as few words as possible my exact position from a financial point of view."

He then narrated the circumstances of the purchase of the practice, and continued:

"Now, my dear Mr. Burton, the state of the case is this: I have asked Beatrice to consent to our marriage taking place on the twenty-fifth of this month. We could have a week's honeymoon at some quiet, cheap place near the sea, and on the first of June we should take up our residence in Birmingham. She agrees to this on one condition only—that you should give your consent. She will not marry me without it; and I need hardly say that I should not feel happy in trying to induce her to do so. Yours very sincerely, ERIC KENLIS."

This letter took Eric the better part of an hour to write. Not that he wasted time over the composition of it—he merely stated facts, and resisted stoutly the temptation to indulge in the rhetoric and rhapsody of a lover—but he often paused, and thought of Beatrice's hazel eyes and the tender pressure of her hand when they had said "Good-by."

♦

CHAPTER III

"YOU are an idle girl! How dare you spend your morning clear-starching muslin petticoats, when I expressly desired that my holland housekeeping aprons should all be got up at once?"

"Oh, Miss Harriet, I'll have your aprons done by tea-time! But I couldn't refuse to do these for Miss Beatrice right off. She wants them this afternoon, I think!"

"Don't tell me what you think, if you please! I'm mistress here—not Miss Beatrice—and my orders are to be obeyed! Miss Beatrice indeed!"—and Miss Steet sniffed, as was her way when she was annoyed. "Am I to have my orders set aside by Miss Beatrice's, pray?" she continued indignantly. "She'll want to set up for mistress here next, I expect!"

"Not she, Miss Harriet," replied Susan, the maid, with a grin—"not she, indeed! Miss Beatrice doesn't want to be mistress here. I'm thinking she'll not be troubling you long; and good-looking he is, too," added the girl, seemingly soliloquizing—"as fine-looking a young gentleman as I ever saw. Ah, what are you thinking of, Miss Harriet, to let Miss Beatrice go off before you, and she the youngest, too?"

But Miss Harriet flounced out of the kitchen, as, perhaps, Susan expected would be the case, for as onlookers proverbially see most of the game, she had often noticed Miss Steet's admiration for Eric Kenlis' dark, bright eyes and well-knit, athletic figure.

"Old cat!" murmured the girl. "I knew that would make her walk; let her sharpen her tongue somewhere else than in the kitchen. Oh, it will be dreary when Miss Beatie goes!"—and Susan very composedly went on with the starching of the muslin petticoats.

It was the day after Eric had gone up to the city for his examination.

Harriet Steet's temper was not good at the best of times, but from the moment of that meeting with Beatrice and Eric on the lawn, when the young lover had announced his engagement so triumphantly, it had become so bad that, in comparison, her former disposition appeared almost angelic.

When she flounced out of the kitchen, to avoid hearing the rest of the maid's remarks upon her dilatoriness in obtaining a husband, Harriet proceeded to the drawing-room. It was a pretty, simply-furnished room, with one broad window opening on the lawn.

♦

There was nothing in the room when Miss Steet looked into it to offend or startle any one; there was, indeed, no living thing in the room at the moment, except a large white butterfly hovering over a bowlful of broad, purple-faced pansies and wild white anemones, which stood on a table near the window. Nevertheless, Miss Harriet gave a start, and, to speak plainly, bounced out of the room as if a bee had stung her in the face, and the following was what disturbed her equanimity:

On a low chair in the window a hat was lying—a rough, coarse, yellow straw hat. Its entire trimming consisted of a cluster of late-flowering pink hawthorn blossoms and a spray of wild young green leaves. Yet, if it had been a brigand's sombrero, with a brigand's head inside it, Harriet Steet could not have looked at it with greater disfavor. She hurried out of the room.

Miss Steet went into the dining-room, thinking that here probably she would be able to darn stockings in peace. But when she opened the door she saw a worse vision than that of the coarse straw hat with "its senseless trimming of rubbishy flowers."

At the table Beatrice was sitting, wearing a white dress dotted over with little blue spots. She had a desk before her, on which lay a sheet of note-paper with a few lines written upon it, but the girl was not writing at the moment Harriet looked in. She had laid down the pen, and her cheek was resting upon her left hand, on the third finger of which was a plain gold ring.

♦

This apparition was worse by a long way than seeing the hat. The dining-room door was actually slammed, and Miss Steet, uttering a word which really was not at all a pretty one, sought refuge in her bedroom. She was not in tears—she was not given to tears. Even for a lost lover weeping would have been the very last way in which her feelings would have found expression.

Miss Steet stamped on the floor, and was getting incoherent, not to say foolish, in her anger and jealousy.

"How long is this to go on?" Harriet queried to herself. She strode up and down the room, muttering to herself, "He'll be coming back and announcing his engagement, forsooth! That was an engagement ring, of course! Dear me! What sweet simplicity! Wild flowers to make a May-day garland for a lamb! I will not have it! And that impertinent Susan, too! I'll give her notice to-morrow, at all events!"

So the silly woman raved to herself, walking up and down the room, and looking exceedingly like a highly-irritated and very vicious specimen of the feline tribe.

A knock was heard at the door.

"Who's there?" Miss Steet demanded.

"Please, miss, master says he's been waiting for you to come and read to him."

"Tell him I'll be with him immediately!"

Miss Harriet was as good as her word. She bathed her rage-flushed cheeks, smoothed her hair, put on a clean holland housekeeping apron, which was bound with red braid, and looked a most prim, mild and methodical little person when she appeared in her grandfather's presence in about ten minutes' time.

And then, until dinner-time, she was occupied reading and discussing the state of the nation and the prospects of the crops, for Mr. Burton had never relinquished his interest in business matters.

Harriet did not find these discussions as irksome as some people would have done. She enjoyed talking about investments as much as an epicure enjoys speaking about eating; and who could tell how much she would be investing some day—in her own name, too—not in imagination, as she was doing at present? The pleasures of imagination are sweet, and in talking of money she forgot for a time even Eric Kenlis.

♦

But no matter how consoling wealth in prospect may be, it cannot prevent nor assuage the pangs of present annoyance. The sight of Beatrice's pretty, grave-looking face—for it looked very grave during these days of waiting—served to make Harriet Steet's temper quite unendurable.

"I thought your friend"—with a waspish emphasis on the word—"was going to write to grandpapa," she remarked to Beatrice one morning. "But no letter has come."

Miss Steet would have liked to think that the pleasures of city life had weaned the young student from his lady-love. But even her animosity could not make her imagine that to be the case, because every morning brought Beatrice a letter in a square envelope with a direction in Eric's bold handwriting.

"No letter has come for grandpapa!" repeated Miss Steet acidly, fixing her small eyes coldly on the now blushing face of her young cousin. "Perhaps your friend has thought better of it?"

Harriet hoped this would be a stab, but it only served to make Beatrice smile.

"I think he is waiting till he graduates," she replied shyly.

"Oh!" A word of two letters can sometimes be very expressive. And this was the case with Miss Steet's ejaculation. "Then we may expect his letter soon?" she added.

"The result will be known to-day. I think grandpapa will hear to-morrow!"

As she spoke Beatrice's eyes filled with tears, and her cheeks grew red. She was grieved that Harriet should have come between her grandfather and herself, and was thinking what Eric's letter would say.

♦

"Yes, life is becoming intolerable!"

Miss Steet was again pacing up and down her bedroom, although not so excitedly as on a previous occasion. She had grown cooler, and was more collected.

"Quite unbearable!" she continued, speaking to herself in a low tone. "It's simply sickening to have to live in the house with a person whose mind is full of nothing but her love-making! And when he returns"—her face assumed a most vindictive expression—"he will be dancing in and out at all hours. Brute! Wretch! How dare he treat me so? How I hate him!"

It was certainly a curious sort of affection which could so quickly turn to hatred with no other provocation than a wounded vanity, but then it was an affection so alloyed with selfishness that it would not stand test or trial. "I wish I could make him smart for it—and she, too, the plotting, scheming, little toad! I wish she was out of the house, and that they were married—and wretched! Oh, how I do hope he will be thoroughly miserable!"

Harriet Steet was allowing her unbridled passion to run away with her.

"What can I do to make him suffer? How can I pay him out?"

As Miss Steet asked herself this question the letter-carrier's knock resounded through the hall. It came almost like an answer, and Harriet started.

When the rat-tat was heard something seemed to say to Harriet, "Here is your chance! Now you can have satisfaction! Hurry!"

She rushed out of the room, down the stairs, into the hall. But Beatrice was before her, and as the door had been standing open, she was about to take the letters from the man's hands, when her cousin came up behind her.

"Give them to me, if you please!" exclaimed Miss Steet, who spoke in the dictatorial, authoritative tone which, for the last few days particularly, she made use of when addressing Beatrice. She did not wait for the correspondence to be handed to her, nor give the girl time to answer, but rudely snatched the little packet from her hand.

♦

There were but three letters. Two were in square white envelopes, directed in Eric's handwriting, one to Mr. Burton, the other to Miss Somerville; the third was a business communication for Mr. Burton.

Harriet examined the superscription very deliberately.

"Oh, do give mine to me!" and Beatrice's voice trembled. She was heart-sick with anxiety, for this note would contain the result of Eric's examination, and yet her cousin was leisurely turning each missive over in a most irritating way. Miss Steet could not refuse to give Beatrice her letter, however, though her fingers itched to tear it into scraps before the girl's eyes.

"There is one for grandpapa from him, too!" Miss Somerville remarked.

"One from whom?" Harriet knew what her cousin meant, of course, but she was glad to have the opportunity of delaying the blushing girl from opening her letter.

"From—er—from Mr. Kenlis. Oh, do, Harriet, please let me run with it to grandpapa! Do, please, let me read it to him! I should like to read it to him myself—just this once! Do let me read it to him, dear Harriet—please do!" Beatrice's voice grew quite piteous, for she could not bear the idea that that particular letter—Eric's communication to her grandfather—should be read out by any voice but her own, and she shrank from the notion of its pages being scanned by Harriet.

Miss Steet, however, held the letter tightly.

"It is one of my principal duties to read his letters to dear grandpapa," she answered very tartly, "and I never relinquish a duty," and, putting the note in her pocket, she turned toward the drawing-room.

"But won't you, at least, take it to him at once?" Beatrice's sweet pleading would have softened most people's hearts, but it had the opposite effect on her cousin's.

"Grandpapa has gone to bed early to-night," Harriet said, "and I am not going to disturb him—even for Mr. Kenlis' letter!"

Beatrice turned away. The stress on the word "even" roused her dignity. She would not condescend to argue, but went to her own room without speaking again. When the door was shut she opened Eric's letter. Yes! He had passed! She knew that he would, for his letters had been full of the

assurance of success; but still the absolute certainty was a relief. Harriet, her grandfather, everything else was forgotten as she put her lips to the note that her lover's hand had penned, and covered it with kisses.

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CHAPTER IV

WHEN Harriet retired to the drawing-room with Eric's communication to Mr. Burton in her pocket, she sat down and began to think.

"What was in the letter?"

Ah, that was what she wished to know! Curiosity gnaws as persistently as toothache or hunger. But she would know in the morning, for she would have to read it to her grandfather.

That was all very well, but the time for doing that was quite twelve hours off—a long period to endure the gnawing. Then came the thought, "Why not open it at once and read it?"

Miss Steet had never unsealed any of Mr. Burton's letters except in his presence. He was a particular old gentleman, and very exacting as to what was due to him. He himself could not see to read, but he could discover whether his correspondence was opened in his presence.

Curiosity, jealousy and prudence waged war for about an hour while Harriet sat in the quiet little drawing-room alone, for Beatrice came down no more that night. The French window was open to the lawn, and the "wind of the summer night" softly swayed the white muslin curtains and made the shadows of the trees on the moonlit lawn quiver and tremble.

Miss Steet was not looking at the moonbeams, however. She was darning a gray stocking by the light of the lamp that stood on a little square table beside her big work-basket, and was thinking as well as working.

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Ten o'clock struck, and Harriet jumped up. She dropped the stocking into the basket, turned out the lamp with a jerk, went to the top of the kitchen stairs and shouted down:

"Put out the candles at once! Haven't you heard the clock strike ten?"

The light disappeared as suddenly as if Miss Steet's voice had been an extinguisher.

"You know I always stand here till I hear you leave the kitchen," she remarked; but no sound was heard save the shuffling of feet in the direction of the servants' room. Harriet heard the door open and shut, then she went upstairs.

Had she but waited a little longer she would have heard the door of the girls' apartment softly reopen, and have seen Susan in her stockinged feet come out to reconnoitre. When assured that the coast was clear, and that "the old cat"—as Miss Steet was designated below—had gone to bed, the cook and housemaid returned to the kitchen, shut the door behind them, so that the light should not be seen in case any one peeped downstairs again, and fell to trimming their Sunday bonnets and abusing the housekeeper with great zest.

Harriet usually retired to rest as soon as she reached her room. Nevertheless, for once she altered her general procedure. Having sat down on the bed, she took the letter addressed by Eric Kenlis to her grandfather from her pocket, looked at it for a few minutes, then deftly inserted a hairpin under the flap of the envelope, and, without tearing the paper, opened the letter.

Yes, curiosity had got the better of prudence, but as to honor, Miss Steet had evidently forgotten that altogether.

She read all about poor Eric's very misty worldly prospects, her thin lips tightened when she came to what he said of his love for Beatrice, and looked glad—yes—really glad!

"Grandfather will never hear of it!" she exclaimed when she had finished the letter. "He will never allow it—not for ever so long, at any rate! And the fool knows nothing about this practice at all—he has evidently bought a pig in a poke!" Miss Steet was an astute young woman, and, though not amiable nor honorable, was certainly sharp, and took in the situation with all its bearings and details at once.

"Grandfather will certainly insist on the marriage being postponed," she reflected. "He will never let Beatrice rush into beggary like this—never! The old idiot cares for her still, though he may value me more! He will insist on their waiting till something is proved about this practice. Why, he may make them wait months and months! The old man in Santiago may die in the meantime, and—— Good gracious! If grandfather came in for the fortune while Beatrice was around him, perhaps he would buy a better practice for Eric. He would do something of the kind as sure as fate, for he is as obstinate as a brute beast, and he likes that odious fellow!"

Miss Steet was as near tears as ever she was in her life as she mentally contemplated this bitter prospect. The limpid drops, however, did not fall, for a sudden thought coming into her mind drove them back.

"That would do it," she exclaimed—"that would settle the whole business!"

The idea, whatever it was, was evidently pleasing, for her face became animated and cheerful! She looked at her watch and muttered:

"Ten minutes past eleven! How late!"

Harriet stooped down, drew off her shoes, opened her bedroom door without the least noise, and stole down to the drawing-room. She was as well able to walk warily in the dark as a cat, and she proceeded to the centre-table without making sufficient noise to alarm a mouse. She felt over the table with the skill of a blind person, took a leather writing-case off it, and regained her room without a single creak having been heard.

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The next morning Beatrice could eat no breakfast. She drank a cup of tea and feverishly fidgeted with her knife. She knew that Harriet read the letters to Mr. Burton immediately after breakfast. He had not been well lately, and generally had that meal in bed, so that, whenever there was any correspondence, it was communicated to him as soon as his tray was taken away. Who could eat while the date of the wedding-day was uncertain? Certainly not poor, oversensitive Beatrice.

The girl would not ask Harriet any questions, for she knew by this time that any effort to hasten her cousin's movements would have the opposite effect. So she went out on the lawn, sat down under a lilac tree, and patiently waited.

"Miss Beatrice," was all at once heard in the voice of Susan, "the master wants to see you, please!"

In a very few seconds Beatrice was standing by old Mr. Burton's bedside, but she was quite speechless from suppressed excitement when he exclaimed:

"Your are a lucky girl!" Then she looked up. The old gentleman, sitting up in bed, did not look well, but he had the appearance of being very much pleased. "You are a lucky girl!" he repeated. "You have got hold of a clever chap! I always liked him, and I guessed what he was after a long while ago; but I didn't think he'd have turned out as sharp as he has! Well, my dear, I shall be sorry to lose you"—and he stretched out his hand and patted her head—"but a girl like you is sure to slip off the hooks early, and it would be a thousand pities to miss this chance. Heaven bless you, my girl! Write to your lover, and say I give my hearty consent, and wish you both luck and long life!"

Then Beatrice threw herself into her grandfather's arms and kissed him over and over again, weeping, despite her happiness, at the thought of leaving him so soon.

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"I am still lost in astonishment, darling, that your grandfather agreed so quickly!"

Eric, who spoke, was now a husband of three days' standing. He and his beautiful bride were sitting in a little mossy dell perched at the top of a cliff overlooking a remote and unfashionable seaside village.

"I certainly thought he would have objected," Eric continued, "and it puzzled me a little the effusive way the old gentleman congratulated me on my brilliant prospects. Of course, twenty-five hundred dollars a year is a comfortable income, but——"

"The first thing he told me after your letter was read," interrupted Beatrice, "was that I was a lucky girl—and so I am, Eric, dear!" she admitted lovingly.

Her husband sighed a little, notwithstanding his happiness.

"I wish I felt that I deserved all Mr. Burton's congratulations, darling," he remarked; "but the one thing I am really to be congratulated on is the prize I've won—that makes me a lucky fellow truly. Only that I wrote a perfectly plain statement of my circumstances to your grandfather, I should have thought that he had misread my letter, and was imagining that I was much better off than I really am."

Poor Beatrice! She and Eric were very happy in the pretty little cottage, where they had taken lodgings for the one blissful week which was to suffice for their honeymoon. Oh, that she could live there always—never to have to tear herself away from the wonderful sea—so much more wonderful to her who had hitherto lived inland.

But, alas, life is not always a bower of roses! It is not always June, and every honeymoon must come to an end.

In three days' time they would have to pack up—leave the pretty little cottage, with its quaint garden filled with beautiful moss-roses, purple phloxes, mignonette, and all kinds of sweet, old-fashioned flowers, besides the useful in the shape of burly cabbages and climbing scarlet-runners—and set off for Birmingham. To them it was an unknown city, where they had not even a friend, and neither of them had ever been before.

This unpalatable idea, however, did not last long. The surroundings were too sweet to make the future uncertainty cast a gloom for more than a few minutes, and the six days of sunshine and June loveliness, of roses and sea-birds, white cliffs and green turf, seashore rambles and rocky scrambles, passed away with the swiftness of a dream.

James Russell Lowell's laudation of the "leafy month" came into Beatrice's mind as she drove, on the last day of her honeymoon week, in the single but rickety fly possessed by the village inn. They were on their way to the station. They had said "Good-by" to the honest coast guardsman and his wife, and were bound for Birmingham, to encounter the stern realities of life.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Mrs. Stowe at Close Range

THE AUTHOR OF UNCLE TOM'S CABIN IN HER HOME

By Florine Thayer McCray

IN TWO PARTS:—PART I

THOSE who have regarded Mrs. Stowe merely as the master mind from which emanated the works of wide range and terrific power, to whose description the writer has been devoted for more than a year, will surely feel a nearer human kinship for these few notes of her personal life.

During the last declining years of her life Mrs. Stowe, then living in her pleasant home on Forest Street, in Hartford, was a familiar figure in the suburban streets at the west end of the city. Her passion for out-of-door life seemed to have increased with age and freedom from care and labor. People looked from their windows several times a day to see the tiny figure of the old lady who was America's most famous woman, passing and repassing to and fro on her excursions. She was an habitual pedestrian, finding in fresh air and exercise relief from the unrest which her weakening nerves entailed. Strangers paused on the pavement, or leaned from their carriages to get another look at her as she passed down the street.

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She was remarkable in her appearance, small and spare, with her face and hands very much wrinkled. Her features, which in youth had been plain, with advancing years took on a sweet expression which was almost beauty—but the casual observer saw only the dark, deeply-lined skin, the pursed-up mouth, and noted the abrupt speech and rather dry voice of the peculiar old lady, whose signs of age much exceeded her seventy-five years. Her hair, which was white, curled carelessly about her face, and was confined in a knot of small curls in the back. Her tiny figure was somewhat bowed—her attire was singularly plain, generally of black, with skirts short for ease in walking, and cloaks of doubtful fit. In summer she wore a shade hat, sometimes of light straw, wound with white muslin, and often a "poke" of black, with plain ribbon.

She frequently wandered miles into the country telling with delight upon her return of some new lane or winding stream she had followed far away, many times coming home from a tramp in the meadows with her skirts bedraggled to her knees, and her feet soaking with moisture. But she had her hands full of flowers and curious leaves, and thought nothing of her own discomfort—one would say felt none—in contemplation of the blossoms and graceful sprays she bore. These were placed in vases, or a bowl, before her clothing was exchanged for drier articles.

A familiar memory is the sight of this venerable form walking past with a speed which can only be described as eager, or returning home with slow and wandering steps, as she bowed over a handful of flowers she had culled from the roadside, touching them tenderly with her fingers from time to time, as one might caress the soft cheek of a child, or holding them to her lips, talking quietly to them as she went. She kept up her daily walks throughout the winter, and the writer frequently joined her, at her own request. She said, "It is so lonesome, always walking alone, and I must walk, you know, to keep well enough to care for my husband."

Professor Stowe was then a confirmed invalid. She said, "I manage to get out every day, at some rate or other. If you notice, you will see that there are not half a dozen days in the year when you can't get out, if you really want to go." She walked in sunshine and showers, seldom carrying a sunshade or umbrella, and neither snow, sleet, nor driving rain prevailed to keep her a prisoner within doors.

One morning Rev. J. H. Twichell, a cherished friend of the aged Professor, looked out of his study window upon the sloping side of a ravine near his home on Woodland Street, and saw Mrs. Stowe stop at the fence and speak to his children, who were sliding down-hill. She bent down, stepped through the fence, and coming into the yard took a seat upon the sled and rode to the bottom of the steep hill with great enjoyment, afterward continuing her walk.

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It was Mrs. Stowe's custom to go to bed as early as seven o'clock every evening, and for an hour or more to read some favorite volume, or one of the numerous publications sent to her for her approval. "I wish they would not," she once said, "for it is hard for me to say I don't like them, and I can't tell a lie, can I?" She was sincerely rejoiced, however, when she found a good book, and spontaneously sent her thanks and kind testimonial to the author.

Mrs. Stowe was generally accessible to callers when their coming did not interfere with her walks, or her duties to her husband. But there began to be evident a growing disinclination to prolong conversation, especially when in the house. She carried out with ease, and freedom from offense, the admonition of Plutarch: "If you light upon an impertinent talker that sticks to you like a burr, to the disappointment of your important occasions, deal freely with him, break off the discourse and pursue your business."

A striking illustration of her peculiar mannerisms may be found in the account of a certain call made upon her by the writer and a New York friend. The lady had specially requested to meet Mrs. Stowe, saying that she had longed all her life to see the author of Uncle Tom's Cabin, and thank her for the good it had done, and the pleasure and profit her works had given the world.

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Mrs. Stowe was told of the request, and quickly gave permission to introduce her. When the time arrived we went to Mrs. Stowe's house, and were received with the rare simplicity of manner which was her own peculiar charm. Mrs. —— looked upon the woman whom she so venerated, with a swelling heart, and with difficulty kept back the tears which sparkled in her eyes. So unaffected, sincere and direct in her few remarks, so totally free from social conventionalities was the great author, that the visitor could only say a few words, telling little of the tide of feeling which uprose at sight of her. After a moment Mrs. Stowe turned away from the heartfelt ovation of the stranger, and said to the writer, referring to a favorite exercise which had been giving strength and enjoyment all summer:

"I love to see you go trundling by on that fairylike carriage of yours. I hope you will always take a turn by here. I feel like mounting it myself. You know I have given my son, Charley, a bicycle. I paid eighty dollars for it, and it does him good, and I enjoy it as much as he does, for he comes every day across town upon it to see me."

Mrs. Stowe answered briefly, though kindly, the few remarks the visitor addressed to her, but soon it was evident, to one familiar with her peculiarities, that the interview, which had not lasted more than five minutes, was about to be terminated. The stranger was in no way prepared for the action of Mrs. Stowe, who arose at this point, took the lady's parasol from the table where it lay, placed it in her astonished hands, giving them a little shake and saying, "Well, Mrs. ——, I thank you for coming to see me, but I must go to my husband now. Good-by."

Before the visitor could recover her breath Mrs. Stowe was gone, leaving her daughters, who were quite used to their mother's privileged actions, to cover her retreat, which they did very pleasantly, though without any comment. They were thoroughly devoted to their mother, took upon themselves the social obligations which she was disinclined to perform, returning her calls, making excuses for her when she was resting or preoccupied—relieving her in every possible way of attentions which might have become irksome.

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Mrs. Stowe was, indeed, a character, and a personality original and quite apart from what might be expected of ordinary human nature. Her simple earnestness followed in sequence the force and directness of her powerful writings, but the singular modesty and unaffectedness of demeanor most confusingly reversed the idea which is gained from her self-sufficiency, as many times displayed in her career. With her, as with others of her family, her own convictions served as her guide. When she felt a call to make a proclamation she did it, sometimes with seeming disregard of opinions which were worthy of consideration. She lived secluded, in her own thoughts, as much separated from the prejudices of the universal mind as could have been the philosopher of Walden, or the most ascetic hermit of history. She went quietly, unobtrusively to the main point, and having taken her stand, as quietly, but with firmness, maintained her position.

Said her son, Rev. Charles E. Stowe, to the writer: "My mother is not to be judged by any of the rules which apply to the rest of human beings. She seems to have been a separate creation, as different from common mortals as is a brook from a tree, and each from a mountain, or the sea."

Mrs. Stowe attended her son's church—the Windsor Avenue Congregational—every Sunday when her health permitted. She will long be remembered as a critical listener to his sermons, shaking her head doubtfully when she considered he had taken untenable ground, or nodding emphatically, with satisfaction, when he had rounded an eloquent period or answered a knotty question.

Occasionally she went in the afternoon to an Episcopal church which was nearer, as her twin daughters, as well as Mrs. Allen, were communicants of that body. She repeated the service without recourse to a prayer-book, seeming to enjoy it very much. In sermon time she, however, became restless, and more than once quietly left her seat and walked down the aisle and up the other side to some place which appeared to be pleasanter, apparently perfectly oblivious to the custom which kept others in their pews, and made her wanderings appear the height of eccentricity. People talked about it, and smiled, with yet a tender word of sweetness for her and a shining tear in their eyes.

The Gratitude of Sam Randolph

HOW THE TRIAL AT SMOKY RUN ENDED

By Edith Sessions Tupper

CHAPTER I

The Winner of the Oratory Prize

HE CAME across the college campus whistling a merry tune. Alert, lithe, sunny-faced, he was a pleasant sight. His hat was pushed back from his soft, golden hair, and with the light stick he carried he whisked the red and white clover-tops off as he passed. He was jubilant and content. Why not? After the exercises to-morrow, life was before him.

The four years of his college course were finished; to-morrow he would, with forty other "men," receive from the hands of the President the precious bit of parchment. To-morrow, too, the prize-speaking contest would be held, and Jack Winthrop knew that in all probability he would be the victor. There was only one other for whom there was any possibility of success, but Jack, fully appreciating his own remarkable gifts of oratory, did not fear his rival in the least.

Jack Winthrop was a fortunate young man. He was the only son of proud and doting parents. He had never known an unsatisfied wish in his life. Every desire was at once gratified. His college career had been marked by liberal expenditure. Singularly enough, all this adulation and kindness had not spoiled him in the least. From his mother he had inherited the sweetest and most amiable of natures. He was generous to a fault, and had so many charming and lovable traits it was small wonder he was admired by every one.

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Though not possessed of any remarkable intellectual powers, he was both clever and versatile. He had a strong dramatic vein in his nature, which had borne fruit in intense and stirring declamation. He had carried off all the oratorical prizes during his course, and there was not a man in his class who did not confidently reckon on his bearing away the palm in the coming contest.

As this blithe, happy-hearted boy came whistling over the campus, he suddenly saw a figure approaching—a tall, gaunt youth, with large features and great, sombre eyes. He was not well dressed. His coat, though neat, was faded and darned in more than one spot. His carefully-brushed hat had long since lost its freshness. He carried large pails of water in either hand. As he came nearer, his eyes rested on handsome, debonair Jack Winthrop with a peculiar expression—an expression of mingled admiration, appeal and despair.

"Hello, Sam," Jack called, and nodding good-humoredly passed on. His happy, careless voice rang yet on the air. Sam heard it still as he put down his pails and looked after him.

Sam Randolph was the drudge of the class. For four years he had toiled early and late. He had risen at daybreak to light fires, carry water and sweep out recitation-rooms. He had pinched, and scrimped, and economized in every way to get through the course. No one knew how much, for there had been many a day when crackers and cheese or plain boiled potatoes had been his only fare. But he was proud and reticent, and had kept all his struggles to himself.

He was an earnest, painstaking student, and his work was never superficially done. He had stood high in his classes, and in some branches his record had been extraordinary. He was a capital speaker. Though lacking the grace and magnetism of Jack, he was yet strong, intense, effective. On several occasions he had pressed Winthrop closely, but the latter each time worsted him.

As he set down his burden he looked after the graceful, athletic figure moving on in easy confidence. He contrasted their respective lots, and thought of the struggle he was about to begin, unaided and empty-handed, with the world. A sigh broke from him. "Oh, it is hard!" he said, taking up the pails.

Meantime Jack was thinking of the morrow. He pictured the scene in the chapel. He saw the great audience of handsomely-dressed people—he could hear their plaudits—he could see the flowers tossed to him as he would come back breathless and flushed to bow his acknowledgments.

Then the triumph! the honor of having won all the declamation prizes of the course. He could see the President pin that coveted medal on his coat—he could hear the crisp rustle of the one-hundred-dollar-bill. Oh, well! as for that, of course, he didn't care. The money was nothing—it was glory he was after. Now, if it were Sam—probably he would care about the money.

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If it were Sam—he stopped short, turned and looked back at the tall, ungainly figure outlined against the green of the trees. Sam was just stooping to take up his burden again as Jack looked. Someway that very posture struck him as pathetic. He remembered how shabby Sam had looked for weeks. It had seemed as if his threadbare clothes would scarcely hold together. He recalled the look in his great, patient eyes as he had just now passed him—almost a look of pleading.

Jack suddenly lifted his hat from his curly head and wiped the perspiration from his brow. A host of thoughts were rioting through his brain, and his pulses were madly leaping.

"I might do it," he said, addressing some imaginary listener; "though why should I?" and he stabbed the gravel viciously with his stick. "Pshaw! it's absurd. I won't think of it—I can't"—he looked again at the retreating figure tugging along with the heavy pails.

"Just think! for four years he has drudged like a—I'll do it!" he cried, and as the words passed his lips a bird in the branches above his head sent up to Heaven a paean of melody that thrilled the boy to the heart.

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As Jack stepped to the front of the platform in the chapel the next afternoon, a little buzz of admiration ran through the audience. Never had this handsome youth looked more manly and attractive. He began his oration, and had not uttered a dozen lines when his friends looked at each other in dismay. What ailed the boy? He was not speaking in his usual style, but without any fire or brilliancy; at times he drawled, and again hesitated and stammered. His chums were in despair, and even the President looked at him in amazement. He paid no heed, however, and hurried through his oration, mumbling and slurring the last few words in ridiculous fashion. There was but faint applause as he finished, and as he walked to his seat it was noticed that he was very pale, and there was a peculiar glitter in the usually merry eyes.

But as he sat down he looked across the stage and met the steady gaze of a pair of pathetic eyes. What he saw there seemed to please him, for he smiled and settled back in his chair as contentedly as though he had covered himself with glory.

Soon Sam's turn came, and, fired by Jack's failure, he surpassed himself. Jack saw the President pin the medal on Sam's coat, and heard the crisp rattle of the one-hundred-dollar-bill, as it was slid into his hand—and he smiled again.

Jack was to leave on the midnight train, and about nine o'clock, as he was hastily packing away the pretty knickknacks in his room, there came a knock at his door. He opened it, and there stood Sam.

"Ah! old boy," Jack said, "come in; I haven't had a chance to congratulate you," and he held out his hand. Sam seized it in both his—he tried to speak, but there was only a convulsive flutter about his lips. Jack could see the big lump working in his throat, and the tears standing in his eyes.

"God bless you!" finally burst from Sam's trembling lips.

"For what?" laughed Jack.

"Oh, don't you suppose I saw it all?" Sam asked nervously. "You didn't try—you faHed on purpose to give it to me."

"Oh, phsaw——"

"Yes, yes, don't deny it! I know it—I never can thank you—Jack, look here," he released his hand long enough to take an old, attenuated wallet from his pocket. Opening it he showed Jack the bill he had received from the President's hand—and nothing more.

"Oh, you don't know what it was to me!" he fairly sobbed. "I hadn't a penny left. I didn't know how I was going to get away, or where I was going. Jack, Jack, I love you. I will never forget it. Please God, I may one day be able to do something for you," and sitting down he buried his face in his hands, the tears trickling through the long, thin, gnarled fingers. Jack said nothing, but with a beautiful protecting movement laid his strong arm over Sam's shoulder.

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CHAPTER II

In the Smoky Run Courtroom

THE judge of the —— circuit of Colorado had been heard to say that he dreaded more to hold court at Smoky Run than at any other town within his jurisdiction. Not only were the crimes committed in that neighborhood of more revolting and lawless character than elsewhere, but there seemed to be a universal demand for blood. If a man were arrested on suspicion, at once, like a pack of howling and hungry wolves, the entire community rushed headlong to destroy the unfortunate wretch.

In the old days Smoky Run had been a favorite resort of Judge Lynch, and a flavor of ancient manners and customs yet lingered in the cry of "Away with him," which was raised on every possible occasion.

"It is a fact," said the eminent judge, in speaking of the difficulties with which he had to contend in this fierce neighborhood, "but it is next to impossible to get an unprejudiced jury at Smoky Run. I have often been amazed at the open and manifest thirst for vengeance which those people seem to possess. They know a crime has been committed, and some one must and shall suffer for it. Of justice tempered with mercy they seem to know or care nothing.

The winter session of the court was at hand, and the judge had reached Smoky Run. The town was in a fever of excitement. A miner called Sandy Joe, by reason of his flaming hair and beard, had disappeared in the most unaccountable manner. One day seen on the streets of the little town, well and hearty, cheerful and talkative—the next day gone—no one knew whither. If one of the yawning caverns upon the mountains that frowned down on Smoky Run had engulfed him he could not have more completely disappeared. Sandy Joe was a popular character—his absence was freely commented on. A search was instituted—not a trace of him could be found. His partner, a fair-haired, sunny-faced boy, yclept Dandy Jack, because of his rather dainty, refined ways, could throw no light on the mystery. The two lived together in a little dug-out near the claim they were working. Dandy Jack said he had wakened in the night, found the door open and Joe gone.

Unfortunately there were those who had been witnesses to hot talk and high words between the two but a day or so previous to Joe's disappearance. Moreover, within the week Jack struck a rich lead of silver ore. Then men began to surmise, and speculate, and look askance, and when, several weeks later, a sodden, disfigured body was found in the cañon near the dug-out, which, in spite of hideous discolorations and decay, was identified as Sandy Joe's, Smoky Run rose as one man and seized Dandy Jack, and for a few hours it was a question whether Judge Lynch wouldn't resume his sway.

But wise counsel prevailed. Jack was examined, indicted, and now was to be tried for his life.

"How say you, prisoner at the bar, guilty or not guilty?"

"Not guilty," came the answer.

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The judge looked down at the young prisoner. He was a slight, delicate-looking lad with a fair, sensitive face. The eyes which met those of the judge were direct and truthful. He was pale from his long confinement, but was neatly and carefully dressed. As he threw back his golden head and answered to the charge, something in the attitude struck the judge, and he looked sharply again at him, and passed his hand across his eyes as if to brush away something—perhaps the cobwebs of memory.

Then the prosecuting attorney arose and proceeded to state what he should prove.

"We propose, your Honor, to conclusively show that Joseph Hawley came to his death by the hand of John Winthrop——" but the judge heard no more. The court, now filled to overflowing with threatening, wolfish faces, faded from his sight. Instead, he saw a large, beautifully-decorated chapel crowded with a gay throng. The rasping voice of the lawyer gave place to the soft, delicious strains of music. Again he smelled the fragrance of the bouquets massed and heaped upon the table yonder. He saw the dignified form and classic face of the President, as, robed in cap and gown, he took his place upon the platform. He saw a tall, graceful, fair-haired youth go forward to speak. He saw a gaunt, ungainly boy in ill-fitting, threadbare clothes regard the speaker hopelessly. He lived again the next few eventful moments when despair changed first to wonder, then to joy and confidence.

"And, your Honor," bellowed the attorney, but the judge was knocking at a door in a certain society house at a college away back East. The door was opened by one whose eyes were like those of the prisoner yonder—whose lips were like those that had just pled "not guilty."

Again the judge felt the grasp of that warm, strong hand, the pressure of that friendly arm across his shoulders—and again, with a great lump in his throat, he heard himself say, "Please God, I may one day be able to do something for you."

"One thing more, your Honor," shouted the attorney, who was red in the face.

With a start, Judge Samuel Randolph awoke from his retrospection. The day had come when he should try to pay his debt. Jack Winthrop's son must be saved.

With legal acumen he soon discovered the mass of the testimony against the prisoner to be the result of prejudice and hasty opinion. It was one of Smoky Run's old tricks over again. Sandy Joe was dead—murdered, all believed, by his partner, who had quarreled with him over some trifling matter connected with their claim. Ergo, evidence or no evidence, Jack Winthrop must hang.

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Great was the wrath of Smoky Run when the judge made several rulings directly in favor of the young prisoner's cause. Threats of impeachment were heard, and the climax was reached when, on the closing day, the opposing lawyers having summed up their cases, Judge Randolph rose and made the charge to the jury which was plainly in favor of the prisoner. There was a sensation in the packed courtroom, and a tall, fine-looking man, who entered just as the judge rose, and who seemed to hang on every word, attracted considerable attention by his great pallor and agitation.

The charge of the judge was marked by vigor and perspicuity. Taking the salient points of the prosecution, with great dexterity he virtually demolished them, and he impressed the flimsiness of circumstantial evidence so strongly upon the jury that, much to the amazement and rage of Smoky Run, without leaving its seat, it rendered a verdict of "not guilty."

Thereupon, a frightful uproar arose, when suddenly, amid frowns and hisses, a voice cried, "Hold on thar, jedge, I 've got a leetle suthin to say 'bout this yer trial," and pushing and elbowing his way through the excited crowd, a big, loose-jointed, fiery-haired man scrambled up to the open space in front of the judge's bench. At sight of him people shrieked aloud in amazement.

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The first thing the newcomer did was to stretch out his brawny arms and gather Dandy Jack to his breast as tenderly as a woman might have done. The boy did not resist, but clutching the broad shoulders stared at the brawny giant in delight.

"Joe, Joe," he cried, "thank God, you're alive."

"Yes," roared Joe, "thank God, I am alive, and here in time ter interfere with a lot of thunderin' idyots"; here he turned to the bench. "Jedge," he said, with unresistible drollery, meantime softly patting his young partner's curly head, "jedge, ef a corpse mought be allowed ter speak at his own funeral, I should say of all the fools in the univarse, Smoky Run's got more'n its share, jedge—more'n its share. It's a great idee if a man ken't take a trip fur his health 'thout all creation jumpin' ter it thet he's ben murdered. I'd heerd of a fair piece of minin' property further south, and seein' as how Jack here felt jest a leetle edgeways toward me, I concluded to go prospectin', and so slipped off quietly thet night. Didn't kalkilate ter be gone no time, but liked the looks of things and so stayed. Hereabout a week ago I got humsick—wanted ter see my pard—'twar mighty lonesome off in thet thar wilderness. I jest kep' a hearin' the tinkle of Jack's banjo, and kep' a seein' the light of his young face—so I pegged along hum. Nice news I found—me dead and buried, and my boy here charged with the murder."

Meanwhile the tall stranger, whose extreme agitation had been remarked by those who stood near him, had worked his way through the throng.

In his turn he snatched Dandy Jack to his breast, and wept over him, and Judge Randolph, slowly descending from the throne of justice, recognized in the young prisoner's father his old friend, John Winthrop.

The latter turning, saw the judge, and going hastily to him, held out his hand saying, "Judge, let me thank you for that charge—so fair, so just. How is it you were the only one to discern the folly of this accusation?"

The dignified judge looked steadily at the trembling father.

"Well, Jack," he said, as he heartily shook the bewildered man's hand, "I knew it was impossible for your son to be a murderer."

"Who are you?"

"See if you don't remember me."

One long, earnest look into each other's eyes, and then Mr. Winthrop cried, "It's Sam—Sam Randolph."

"Yes, Jack," said the judge, his hand closing tighter over Winthrop's, "it's Sam. Sam, who has never forgotten the bread you so generously cast to him years ago. After many days it returns to you."

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Two Days Without a President

By Barton Cheyney

IT HAS been affirmed, and doubtless with entire truth, that our Government cannot be conducted without a President; that everything would come to a standstill; or, worse, that our Republic would fall to pieces. Under the Constitution there can be no semblance of Government without a Chief Executive, and very generous provisions are made against the possibilities of such a contingency. But notwithstanding these, upon one occasion we were without a President for a period of two days. As a matter of course, the Presidential chair being without an occupant for so short a time made no real difference, especially as there was a new President before half the country knew that we had been without one. But the statesmen of that day did not view the situation with complacency. The interregnum occurred, it will be recalled, in 1841. General Harrison had been inaugurated President on March 4 of that year, and exactly one month later he died, after a few days' illness. John Tyler, who was inaugurated Vice-President at the same time as General Harrison's inauguration, had returned to his home at Williamsburg, Virginia, a few days after, and, consequently, was not in Washington when President Harrison died.

Upon President Harrison's sudden death a messenger was sent by the members of his Cabinet posthaste to Vice-President Tyler, to notify him of the unexpected occurrence, and directing him to proceed with all due dispatch to the National capital. It required two days for the messenger to reach the Vice-President, and to return to Washington in his company. When Mr. Tyler reached Washington, on April 6, he was at once sworn in as President of the United States, the Nation having been without a President for two days. President Harrison was the first of our Chief Executives to die in office.

Why Marriages are Decreasing

THE DANGER SIDE OF MODERN PROGRESS

By J. Lambert Payne

IT MAY be boldly stated that the number of marriages in America, in proportion to the population, is certainly declining. Men and women are not keeping up the marriage rate of thirty years ago; on the contrary, the proportion of single persons to the total marriageable population has strikingly increased since that period.

This is not a hastily-formed judgment, based on scanty facts, but is the conclusion to which I have been forced by sustained, careful investigation. Others, in one connection or another, have expressed the same conviction, but the matter has neither received that general attention which its importance has warranted, nor been made the subject of close inquiry by those who control the statistical information of the country, and could throw the brightest light upon it. This is both surprising and disappointing. The conjugal condition of the people is the mainspring of a nation's life, and, more than anything else, is the basis of general happiness and well being.

From the latest census figures it is learned that in 1890 there were in the United States 8,228,868 males between twenty and thirty-four years of age, of whom 4,389,084, or more than half, were single. Of that number 1,883,624 were between twenty-five and thirty-four years of age, which may be regarded as the most eligible period. There were over one million single men between thirty and forty years of age—which number, added to those who were unmarried between twenty-five and thirty, made up an army of bachelors larger than any body of men that has ever taken the field at one time in the wars of the world. Turning to the young women, the same inexorable authority informs us that there were 7,774,215 of between twenty and thirty-four years of age. They seem, however, to have followed the domestic instinct to more purpose than the young men of corresponding age, for only 2,569,560 were single—although that is a very large number. At thirty-four years of age there were barely 340,000 unmarried, as against double the number of young men of a similar age. Adding the two classes together, the impressive fact is revealed that at the period of the last census there were in the United States 1,883,624 young men between twenty-five and thirty-four years of age, and 2,569,560 young women of eligible years—or 4,453,184 in all—who were single.

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So large a number of unmarried men and women is the direct outcome of a diminishing ratio of marriages, as compared with twenty-five years ago. To make that comparison, however, it is necessary to look elsewhere for data; for, to the reproach of the census service be it told, the record of married and single persons taken in 1870, and again in 1880, has not been published. To gain the desired information, I have looked into the marriage statistics of some of the older States, in which the conditions of life are regarded as fairly settled. Taking Massachusetts, for example, there were 22,597 marriages in 1891, as compared with 15,746 in 1871, but had the rate of 1871, on the basis of population, been maintained, the figure would have been 24,191. This falling off of 1,684 marriges in a single year in that State was the result of a steadily-declining scale during the whole period of twenty-two years, fluctuating at times, but always pointing in the same direction. There is, of course, no good reason why a fixed proportion of single and married persons should be found in each community, but, leaving aside the consideration of that phenomenon, the main fact remains true that in the State of Massachusetts the marriage rate has shown a marked decline since 1870.

New York State and the contiguous Province of Ontario, across the Canadian line, have had the same experience as Massachusetts. The relative number of unmarried men and women has steadily increased. I have not, however, allowed my judgment to be guided wholly by the cold figures of statistics. I have appealed to men in a position to give a competent opinion—clergymen, registration clerks, and others—and in every instance the answer has been given that not only was the marrying age of young men on the ascendant, but the actual number of marriages was diminishing in proportion to population.

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Why has the marriage rate declined? How does it come that men are deferring marriage until a later period in life than was the custom a generation ago, and that a steadily-increasing proportion are not marrying at all? To answer these vital questions, let any one living in the older communities of this continent look thoughtfully around. Let him compare present circumstances of life with those of twenty-five years ago—the scale of living, the cost of domestic comforts and the general demand for luxuries. Let him compare the habits of young people. Let him do this in an honest search for the truth, and he will find a direct cause of all this mischief. He will find that the scale of living has been very greatly enhanced since 1870; that what may be respectfully termed "the great middle class" of America is spending much more money for home luxuries, for dress and for outside pleasures, than in former years. An income of eight hundred dollars a year does not mean what it did when the mothers of to-day were children; on the contrary, while the purchasing power of that sum has been enormously increased, the social conditions now surrounding the recipient compel him to make many seeming sacrifices. He must live a very modest life in order to make both ends meet and supply the real needs of his family. His sons and daughters, as they grow out of childhood, must spend considerably more on dress and social engagements than did the young men and women in the simpler times of the past.

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To the prevailing extravagance of our day may be charged this disturbance in the marriage rate. Directly associated with that cause is another, scarcely less important, which seems to be gaining force every year. I refer to the vast number of young women undertaking to earn a livelihood. Twenty-five years ago not one young woman was winning a competence in lighter clerical or professional work, which permitted her to dress well and live independently, to thirty who are doing so to-day. This has not only involved a significant economic revolution, but has materially affected social conditions. There is abundant room for the fear that the extent to which young women have invaded offices, counting-houses and places of business, has carried with it the displacement of young men. At all events, it is true that what in days gone by were regarded as legitimate starting points in life for young men, are now often preempted by young women—holding their vantage-ground by useful and efficient work—and to that extent the field for young men has been contracted. But the really serious phase of the case grows out of the fact that a large majority of the young women who work do not really need to. They work because it has become fashionable. Tens of thousands of girls in the United States are working because they can thereby add to the luxuries of life—dress better, live better and be independent. It gives them a sense of freedom. Very often it enables their parents to live in a better house, to pay more rent, and to maintain a social standing they would otherwise have to forego. Young women have a perfect right to do this; I am dealing merely with the facts, not with criticism. This constantly increasing army of young women workers is, however, aggravating conditions which tend to a waning marriage rate.

In primitive days, when a young man wished to marry, he found a young woman who was companionable to him, and without much ado their union was solemnized. If the young man had an income of five hundred dollars a year he felt himself in a good position to make a happy and promising start in life. His wife felt the same. They could pay a moderate rent, meet the simple necessities of two young people, dress comfortably and neatly, enjoy a few luxuries, pay their way easily and look inspiringly forward to better days. They never thought of taking lodgings; they started on the sound basis of an independent home. With enough to live on plainly, they cared only to know they were well mated and contented. This may seem a fanciful picture, but it presents truly the customary start in married life by the generation which developed our fathers and grandfathers. Young men and young women were then less ambitious; they took a sensible view of their social standing as young married people.

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What happens to-day in our large centres of populations, and in all the older communities, is quite different. The average young man is shamefully wasteful, and looks upon eight hundred dollars or one thousand dollars a year, as wholly insufficient for the start he thinks necessary in married life. He knows he could commence on that income if he were content to live modestly and quietly until his circumstances improved. But the influence of all the conditions of modern social life is to make young people shrink from such sacrifices. They want as many comforts as their fathers and mothers are having. Very often the prodigality of the young man has kept him from saving anything wherewith to furnish his new home, and, at the same time, he believes that the young women who move in his circle expect to begin married life in a beautifully-furnished house. At all events, he constantly hears them talk in that strain. Thus it ends in his deferring marriage. In many instances, as statistics and observations prove, it means putting it off altogether. He would rather remain single than ask some young lady, living in a comfortable home, to step into a suburban cottage and help him climb into a better estate.

How do young women who work affect the marriage rate? As has been said, they interfere with the employment of young men. I say all honor to the young women who have the courage and energy to be independent; they have my admiration and sympathy, but the truth must not be blinked at. They are entering clerical work in such vast numbers as often to block the avenues for generations trodden only by young men. They are preferred and they are there to stay. They take minor clerkships, formerly looked upon as the starting point for boys, and so boys must find other openings. Young men with only clerical skill to sell, find the market disturbed and restricted. If they get a start, the road to a fair salary is longer and harder than before young women, with deft, fingers and bright minds, were favored rivals. But that is not all. The young woman who works is apt to remain single. She sacrifices, to a degree, her domestic qualities and virtues—and it is the "home girl" whom most men prefer to marry. She also weakens her own incentive to marriage, in that she is able to live independently and comfortably without marriage. Be that as it may, she is an important factor in the causes now operating to intensify social conditions that diminish the number of marriages. The situation also bears another aspect: young men become extravagant and do not marry. Young women, then, because they are not married, or have made no engagement in that direction, take employment, competing with men.

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It is a popular delusion that there are more women in the world than men, and that an unavoidable result is the existence of many spinsters. The fact is, that when the last census was taken there were in the United States 32,067,880 males and 30,554,370 females. This proportion is practically true of most of the civilized nations. In some States of this continent there are more females than males, but, taking the country as a whole, males predominate. Women are not being left to a single life because there are not enough men in the country to provide husbands for all; but rather because most young men are living wastefully and believe they cannot afford to marry. They see their parents and their neighbors living so as to make the best possible show. Homes are being carried on with two thousand dollars of annual income as though that income were four thousand dollars. The middle class of this continent are imitating the ways of the rich. This is essentially "the age of plated ware"—the age of veneer and counterfeit—the age that is stimulating men and women to live in fictitious elegance.

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Looking forward, it needs no more than ordinary perspicuity to see that a continued low marriage rate must mean disappointment and unhappiness to uncounted thousands of men and women. There are, unfortunately, many infelicitous marriages, many that bring anguish and lifelong misery to the contracting parties. But, nevertheless, it is true that the man who finds a companionable wife, or the woman who finds a worthy and congenial husband, is better, happier, and truer for it. He and she will live a wider, more influential and a richer life than in the single state. One lives a narrow and incomplete life who remains alone from youth and maidenhood to old age. That there are compensations in the life of a bachelor or a spinster may be admitted, without impairing the broad truth that marriage brings contentment and happiness. The young man who remains single has not the same incentive to enterprise as the man who is married. He does not act with the same settled purpose, he does not do his best, he does not fulfill the highest functions of citizenship. The young woman who does not become the head of a home misses far more than half of what life should really mean for her.

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But argue it as we may, no good can possibly come from the discovery that marriages are growing fewer, unless it leads to an intelligent and general examination of the causes. If the people at large become convinced that simpler methods of life, in which the well-to-do no longer imitate the rich, would correct this mischief—aye, and others equally serious—then some good may be done. At the present hour the struggle seems more active and widespread than ever before. The passion for display has reached an acute stage. This means greater cost of living, and less margin between income and outgo. It means two or three million young men, and as many young women, who might be happily married, living to themselves.

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Increasing Number of Wage-Earners

TAKING the whole number of persons engaged in all remunerative or gainful occupations, says Carroll D. Wright, I find that in 1860 such persons constituted 26.19 per cent. of the whole population. In 1870 this percentage had increased to 32.43, in 1880 to 34.68, while in 1890 it was 36.31, an increase of more than 10 per cent., relatively, in one generation, the period from 1860 to 1890. This, it should be borne in mind, is the percentage which the total number of persons engaged in gainful occupations is of the total population of the country.

Wit in Cross-Examinations

Compiled by Alfred H. Miles

PAST-MASTER IN OBTUSENESS.—Jim Webster was being tried for trying to bribe a colored witness, Sam Johnsing, to testify falsely. "You say this defendant offered you a bribe of ten dollars to testify in his behalf," said Lawyer Gouge to Johnsing. "Yes, sah." "Now repeat precisely what he said, using his own words." "He said he would gib me ten dollars ef I——" "He can't have used those words. He didn't speak as a third person." "No, sir; he tuk good keer dat dar was no third pusson present. Dar was only two—us two. De defendant am too smart ter hab anybody list'nin' when he am talkin' about his reskelity." "I know that well enough, but he spoke to you in the first person, didn't he?" "I was de fust pusson myself." "You don't understand me. When he was talking to you, did he use the words, 'I will pay you ten dollars?'" "No, boss; he didn't say nuffin about you payin' me ten dollars. Yore name wasn't mentioned, 'ceptin' he tole me ef I got enter a scrape dat you was de best lawyer in de town for coverin' up any kind of reskelity." "You can step down."

THE QUESTION OF THE SEAL.—Warren, the distinguished lawyer and author, once produced a great sensation in court by his examination and exposure of a false witness. The witness having been sworn, he was asked if he had seen the testator sign the will, to which he promptly answered he had. "And did you sign it at his request, as subscribing witness?" "I did." "Was it sealed with 'red' or 'black' sealing-wax?" "With red wax." "Did you see him seal it with the red wax?" "I did." "Where was the testator when he signed and sealed this will?" "In his bed." "Pray, how long a piece of wax did he use?" "About three or four inches long." "Who gave the testator this piece of wax?" "I did." "Where did you get it?" "From the drawer of his desk." "How did he light that piece of wax?" "With a candle." "Where did that piece of candle come from?" "I got it out of the cupboard in his room." "How long was that piece of candle?" "Perhaps four or five inches." "Who lit that piece of candle?" "I lit it." "What with?" "With a match." "Where did you get that match?" "On the mantel-shelf in the room." Here Warren paused, and fixing his eyes on the witness he held the will above his head, his thumb still resting upon the seal, and said, in a solemn and measured tone: "Now, sir, upon your solemn oath, you saw the testator sign that will; he signed it in his bed; at his request you signed it as a subscribing witness; you saw him seal it; it was with red wax he sealed—a piece two, three, or four inches long; he lit that wax with a piece of candle which you procured for him from a cupboard; you lit that candle by a match which you found on the mantel-shelf?" "I did." "Once more, sir, upon your solemn oath, you did?" Witness (emphatically): "I did." Counsel (addressing the judge): "Your honor, it is a wafer!"

THE NAME IN THE HAT.—O'Connell was one of the best cross-examiners of his day. Once he defended a man of the name of John Connor on a charge of murder in Cork, and the principal witness for the Crown was a policeman, who found the prisoner's hat, which he left behind him in his flight from the scene of his guilt. After traveling backward and forward, as was his habit in cross-examination, from the all-important question as to the identity of the hat, he thus continued: O'Connell—"Now, then, you swear that the hat in my hands is the hat you found—in every particular the same?" Witness—"I do." O'Connell—"And inside the hat was written the prisoner's name (looking into the hat and spelling the name very slowly), 'J-o-h-n C-o-n-n-o-r?'" Witness—"Yes!" O'Connell (holding up the hat in triumph)—"My lord, and gentlemen of the jury, there is no name in the hat at all." This aroused a deep sensation in court, and ultimately the prisoner was acquitted.

THE VALUE OF AN ARCHITECT.—There is a story on record of an architect repudiating any connection with the building fraternity in the case of the late eminent Mr. Alexander, the English architect. He was under cross-examination in a special jury case at Maidstone, by Sergeant Garrow, who wished to detract from the weight of his testimony, thus: "You are a builder, I believe?" "No, sir, I am not a builder, I am an architect." "Ah, well, architect or builder, builder or architect, they are much the same, I suppose?" "I beg your pardon, sir, I cannot admit that; I consider them to be totally different." "Oh, indeed, perhaps you will state wherein this great difference consists?" "An architect, sir, prepares the plans, conceives the design, draws out the specification—in short, supplies the mind; the builder is merely the bricklayer or the carpenter—the builder, in fact, is the machine; the architect the power that puts the machine together and sets it going." "Oh, very well, Mr. Architect, that will do; and now perhaps you can inform the court who was the architect of the Tower of Babel?" "The Tower of Babel, sir!" replied the witness. "There was no architect—and hence the confusion!"

For the Honor of the Battalion

CAPTAIN FORTESCUE'S LOVE STORY

By Florence Marryat

IT WAS a certain day in June that the officers' quarters of the Royal Artillery, stationed at Elchester, might have been seen in a state of ferment. Doors were opening and slamming, stentorian voices called for attendants or for light refreshments, and soldier servants ran to and fro in obedience to the issued commands. Before the barracks were standing vehicles of all descriptions—mail-carts, tax-carts and dog-carts—waiting for their owners, while a dozen riding horses were being led up and down by their grooms. But all this commotion had nothing to do with the honor of the service. Young officers appeared every now and then, at the windows, or hanging over the banisters of the staircase, clad in the jauntiest of pale gray or light brown tweed suits, with rosebuds or the white stephanotis flower in their buttonholes, looking as merry as boys out for a holiday.

There is nothing an English officer enjoys more than to get out of his uniform for a few hours. The young artillerymen in themselves were pictures. All of them not only men of good families, but men with good brains (for that examination for the artillery was not to be passed without hard study and an able intellect), they were turned out in the pink of perfection, and their high spirits added to their attraction. Their handsome faces beamed with the anticipation of pleasure, for they were going, not to the field of glory, but to a regimental picnic given by themselves to all the prettiest girls in Elchester, which was to be held twelve miles off in that most charming of all spots for a *fête champêtre*, the New Forest, at Southampton—that forest almost primeval, which was the scene of the death agony of William Rufus.

"Where's Fortescue?" called Willie Selwyn, as he emerged from his room "dressed to kill," as they say.

"Hasn't come out," replied a brother officer.

"Not come out yet," repeated Selwyn incredulously; "why, he was ready half an hour ago! What's he thinking of? I must go at once and wake him up."

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Captain Fortescue would have found it difficult at that moment to tell any one what he was thinking of, as he sat in an armchair in his own quarters, with his hand resting upon his head. He was a remarkably handsome man, acknowledged to be so, not only by the fair sex, but by his own, who all regarded him as the "show man" of the battalion. He was tall, but not too tall, had an excellent figure, with clean limbs and well-knit muscles, riding about twelve stone without an ounce of superfluous flesh on his body. His hair was dark, so was his complexion, but his eyes were of a deep blue with black lashes and eyebrows. Had his mustaches (which were of a lighter and redder shade than the hair on his head) not covered his mouth, it would have been seen that he possessed a very firm though tender one, and filled with the whitest of teeth, betokening a kind heart in a wholesome body. Indeed, in all things Hugh Fortescue appeared to be the most fortunate of men. He was the owner of good looks and good birth—was young and had an ample fortune. After this it need scarcely be said that he was regarded as a prize by the female portion of Elchester. Many were the gauntlets that had been thrown down to him, but he had never stooped to pick them up. And yet it was the subject of love he was musing on to-day.

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The fact is, Hugh Fortescue had begun to be tired of the life he was leading. He was thirty years of age, and gayeties and dissipation palled on him. He felt there was something better in this world than smoking, and feasting, and drinking—something purer and more satisfying than the conversation of the messmen, the clink of glasses or the rattle of the billiard balls. He was beginning to sigh for the pleasures of domestic life, and a refuge from the outside world, but he was still uncertain about trying marriage. His thoughts would never have turned in that direction, perhaps, had he not been attracted by the beauty of Cecelia Murray, who was the belle of Elchester. Captain Fortescue had known and admired Miss Murray for a long time—had danced with her at innumerable balls, and whispered all sorts of "sweet nothings" in her ear, but it had never struck him till quite lately that he would like to make her his wife. Suddenly it had burst upon him that he was in love, and as suddenly he had become timid and uncertain of success. But he was seemingly pondering now whether he would not propose to her that afternoon, if he got a good opportunity. But he felt warm and uncomfortable when he thought of it.

"Fortescue," exclaimed Selwyn, bursting upon the Captain's reverie, "it's time to start. But I say, old fellow, are you going to drive Blazer?"

"I am. Why not?"

"He'll bolt, you know, as sure as a gun!"

"Not a bit of it. I've tamed him down wonderfully the last week, and the road is like a bowling green! You needn't come if you don't like."

"Hang it, man! how am I to go then? I've made no arrangements for myself! But the wait is likely to make him fidgety."

"He won't wait. I'm not going to have any tying up under trees, *et cetera*. Sanderson will take him round to the 'Royal Deer.'"

"All right. Let's be off then. It won't do to let our guests get there first."

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At this announcement Fortescue rose from his chair, settled himself before the looking-glass, and went downstairs, leisurely pulling on a pair of light gray gloves. The dog-cart, with Blazer, a magnificent chestnut horse, with too much white in his eye, was drawn up in readiness for him, and in company with his friend he mounted it and gathered up the reins. Blazer immediately made a futile attempt to stand on his hindlegs, but Fortescue was an excellent whip, and after a little persuasion the animal felt he was conquered, and proceeded obediently, though at a rattling pace, down the High Street of Elchester. Most of the officers started at the same time, and many a head was thrust out of the window to watch the gallant cavalcade bowling along the road to Southampton, which is, without exception, the widest, smoothest, and most beautifully shaded high road, perhaps, in England. Occasionally they passed some of their guests on the way, jogging along in hired vehicles.

"That little Miss Lester is a 'stunner,'" said Selwyn, as they passed a carriage full of young men and women, "and I don't think there will be any one to eclipse her at the picnic to-day. I think we shall have every good-looking woman in Elchester there. What do you say, Fortescue? Who will be the belle of the party?"

"That's an impossibility for any one man to determine. It should go by ballot. Ada Heriot is a very pretty girl."

"But she can't hold a candle to Miss Murray. After all, I think she'll take the prize. She's such a regal-looking girl—more like a queen than a commoner. Don't you agree with me?"

"She's well enough."

"What a cool rejoinder. Forty, my boy, you're *blasé*. And yet I always used to imagine you were rather taken in that quarter. You spend a good deal of time at their house. Perhaps it's the little one you admire, or even the widow herself, eh?"

"Shut up, and don't be a fool," replied Fortescue in the pleasant manner Englishmen usually affect when they want to disguise their real feelings. In little more than an hour they found themselves on the outskirts of the famous forest, where the horses and vehicles were dismissed in the charge of their servants, and the officers began to make their way to the trysting place—Rufus' Oak—the very tree under which the unfortunate monarch met with his death. Oh, the wonderful depth, and seclusion, and stillness of that old-world woods. Selwyn and Fortescue, with some of their brother officers, had not penetrated the depth of the forest far before they came on Mrs. Murray and her daughters, all three in a state of alarm, because they had heard the bark of a stag in the distance.

"Oh, Captain Fortescue," cried the widow, "how glad I am that you have come. Cissy and Nellie and I are in a terrible fright. I am sure the red deer are coming down upon us. We heard their cry distinctly. But now you are here, we are safe."

"I am glad you feel that at all events," replied Fortescue as he saluted the ladies, "though I am not quite sure what we could do if they chose to make our acquaintance. But there is no fear of it, Mrs. Murray. The red deer are not in this part of the forest. Let me offer you my arm. Are we not fortunate in the weather?"

"Oh! it's quite too charming, and I and the girls are looking forward to a most delightful day. Nellie, my dear, don't stick your head forward in that way. One would think you were humpbacked."

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Nellie Murray, thus brought to order, blushed scarlet and drew her head back. She was a little girl, not so tall by several inches as her queenly sister, neither was she pretty. Her complexion was pallid, her eyes mediocre, and her features commonplace. By the side of Cecelia she was positively plain. But Nellie had a heart, a simple, frank and loving heart, which had (unfortunately for herself) been given away some time before. But she nursed her love in secret, for she never believed it would receive any return, and so she was ashamed to have conceived an affection that was merely on her side. And Nellie was seen to the greatest disadvantage by the side of her sister, who was really a beautiful woman. Cecelia Murray was "a daughter of the gods, divinely tall and most divinely fair." Her golden hair was wreathed in abundant plaits about her shapely head. Her skin was like alabaster, her eyes like two crystals, clear, hard and sparkling; her small nose, with closed nostrils and tiny mouth, denoted a secretive and avaricious disposition; but what man, ever looking at a woman's beauty, stayed to consider what sort of character lay beneath it? All Elchester was at the feet of Cecelia Murray, and Hugh Fortescue, noting how the officers crowded around her, strengthened his resolve to speak to her at once and learn his fate. Meanwhile he took no more notice of Nellie than if she had not been present.

On arriving at the appointed place of meeting they encountered the rest of their guests, numbering, perhaps, sixty or seventy, and the party naturally separated. Hands were being shaken and greetings exchanged on every side, and preparations for the picnic began. Four large tablecloths were spread on the greensward by the servants in attendance, and kept down at the corners by stones. Then the hampers were unpacked and every delicacy that could be thought of was laid out before them. Noble sirloins of roast beef—roasted, mind you, not in a gas oven, but before an open fire in the good old English style—flanked by a dozen varieties of salads, pies and mayonnaises—by roast fowls, ducks and game—by patties and tarts of all sorts—trifles, ice-creams and bonbons—and every fruit in season. The wines were ready to be handed around—the long-necked bottles of champagne, the delicate hock, sparkling burgundy and full-bodied port, and brandies and sodas, without which Englishmen, as a rule, cannot find their tongues.

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When military men undertake to do a thing they always do it well. Their dances, private theatricals and picnics are invariably so liberally and artistically managed that they are a by-word in the country, and the disappointed schemers to obtain invitations are usually in excess of the delighted guests. The artillery stood to their colors on the present occasion. The banquet was as near perfection as could be, and when the ladies' shawls and cloaks, and the gentlemen's rugs had been arranged around the tablecloths to form seats for the guests, a few bandmen, who had accompanied the excursion, struck up a lively air from a little distance among the trees, and the festivities of the day began.

Captain Fortescue did not sit next to Cecelia Murray, he sat opposite to her. He felt he could hardly trust himself, after his resolution, in such close proximity to her before a crowd. It would confuse him, and he would appear stupid and distracted, and fall in the eyes of his divinity. But from where he sat he could feast upon her charms in silence. And he did not suffer for his reticence. As he stole furtive glances at her beauty Cecelia's eyes were often raised from beneath the brim of her white chip hat, and then suddenly lowered as though she were unable to bear his gaze. Fortescue's spirits rose with the occasion. By the time the dinner was concluded he felt sure of his prize. And indeed he had every reason to be so. Cecelia Murray knew too well the value of his attentions to throw cold water on them. As soon as the guests rose from the table, and the bandmen and servants prepared to fall upon the remnants of the feast, Captain Fortescue hastily sought her side, and, asking her if she would like to explore the forest, they were soon strolling away together. Mrs. Murray looked after them with complacency.

"Nellie," she exclaimed sharply, as she thought she saw a disposition in the younger girl to accompany them, "stay by me. I want you."

But at that moment an old gentleman, well known to Mrs. Murray, offered his arm, and Willie Selwyn secured Nellie's company for himself. He had always liked the pale-faced and snubbed little girl, and believed there was a great deal more in her than most people thought. So Nellie and he chatted together of flowers and ferns, and such like innocent things, and were soon separated from the rest of the company.

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Meanwhile, Fortescue had led Cecelia some distance, and was talking to her in low and somewhat nervous tones, for he had no idea it was so much trouble to make a proposal.

"Miss Murray," he began, "you like this sort of life, don't you?"

"What, picnicking in the forest, Captain Fortescue?"

"Oh, no. I don't mean that. I mean the rattle, and noise, and gayety of a garrison town."

"Oh, it is delightful. I dote on it. I don't think I could ever make up my mind to live in the country again."

"Yet regimental life has its drawbacks—for ladies, especially," said Fortescue thoughtfully. "We move about frequently. It is impossible to make a home."

"Don't you think," remarked Cecelia, "that home is where the people you care for are?"

"You are right, quite right," he said fervently, "and if I only thought——"

"What?" she added.

"If I only dared to think—Miss Murray, I'm afraid I must look like a great fool to you at the present moment, but when a man has cast all his hopes in life on one die it makes him nervous in spite of himself."

At that moment a party of young men and women, perhaps a dozen in number, sprang out upon them from behind a clump of trees, with a wild halloo that made Fortescue's blood freeze in his veins.

"Come out of that, Rosalind and Orlando," they shouted. "We are going to have a game of '1-spy-1,' and you must join us."

"Nonsense! we are not children," replied Captain Fortescue, frowning.

"Oh, yes, you are. We all are just for to-day, and a rural game is the very thing to play in the forest. Do come, won't you," urged some girls in his very face.

They were his guests and he could not refuse them without seeming rude, so he hastily whispered to Cecelia, "I'm afraid I must join them. But will you promise to let me drive you home this evening, instead?"

"Yes, if mamma consents," she replied, and then the crowd pressed upon them

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The picnic was to be followed by a dance and supper at the Elchester barracks, and the various vehicles for conveying the company home were ordered at the early hour of five. Fortescue was ready, in waiting with his dog-cart, and entreated Mrs. Murray to let him have the honor of driving her daughter home.

"Do, mamma," urged Cecelia. "It is such a lovely evening."

Mrs. Murray looked up and saw that Mr. Selwyn was to occupy the back seat.

"Well, my dear," she replied, "I've no objection, if your sister Nellie goes with you, but I could not think of your driving with Captain Fortescue alone."

"Miss Nellie can go on the back seat if she doesn't mind, and Selwyn will look after her," said Fortescue quickly.

"Very well, Captain Fortescue. In that case I will trust both my treasures to you, and mind you look after them," returned the widow, smiling as she walked away.

Poor little Nellie climbed up to the back seat and sat down by her friend, Mr. Selwyn, who soon engaged her in a pleasant conversation. At first all went smoothly. Fortescue was feeling his way round to the point where his *tête-a-tête* with the beautiful Cecelia had been so rudely interrupted, and she was blushing deeply every moment as she felt the important question coming nearer and nearer, when Blazer, having been left a little too much to his own devices, gave a sudden start and a rear. Cecelia gave a scream that frightened the horse still further, and though Captain Fortescue had a firm hand on the rein in a moment he found great difficulty in soothing the animal. Nellie was much alarmed, and her face became white as a sheet, but she said nothing. Blazer refused to be pacified. A boy had suddenly risen to his full height from a ditch and frightened him out of his senses. He reared several times, to the imminent danger of the dog-cart, and when his driver had persuaded him to abandon his curvetting, he dashed off at a furious pace down the Southampton road. Fortescue had only time to exclaim, "Don't be alarmed, ladies; I'll quiet him in a moment," when he had to direct all his attention to the maddened animal, which had now taken the bit between his teeth and refused to obey the whip or rein. He found his efforts for their safety greatly impeded by Cecelia Murray, who continued to shriek at intervals, and clutched at his arm.

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"Don't jump out, whatever you do," cried Selwyn as he saw Cecelia rise in her seat, but as he said the word Blazer met another vehicle driving down the road, and with a tremendous swerve he dashed the dog-cart into a wide ditch and turned it completely over. The two men were on their feet in an instant, one at the head of the prostrate horse, and the other to raise the fallen girls.

"Are you hurt?" exclaimed Fortescue anxiously, as he advanced to the side of Cecelia, who lay shrieking in about a foot of stagnant water.

"Oh, Captain Fortescue! I think all my limbs are broken. And look at my dress. Wet through. Oh, what will mamma say?"

"Never mind the dress. Try and stand, and let me see you are not injured."

Thus adjured, Miss Murray managed with his assistance to rise to her feet.

Leaving her he went to her sister.

"Now, Miss Nellie," he said.

But Nellie did not answer. She was lying on her face with one leg doubled under her. Selwyn had dragged Blazer out of the ditch by this time, but the dog-cart was smashed and unfit for further use.

"Look here, Selwyn!" exclaimed Fortescue, "I'm afraid Miss Nellie has fainted. I hope she isn't hurt in any way. What are we to do?"

Selwyn looked puzzled.

"I'm sure I can't tell, with the trap in this condition, unless you and Miss Murray will stay with her, while I try to ride this brute back into Southampton for help."

But luckily at this moment they were overtaken by the officers' drag, in which was the doctor of the battalion.

The drag was pulled up and Dr. Probe jumped out and came up to Nellie's side. He turned to her gently and felt her limbs.

"She is unconscious," he said gravely, "and her thigh is broken. The best thing we can do is to lift her gently into the drag and take her back at a walking pace to the Southampton Hospital."

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It was six weeks after this occurrence, when Captain Fortescue asked for a private interview with his commanding officer. Nellie Murray was convalescent by that time and had been brought home to her mother's house, but she was a cripple for life. The broken thigh had been set, but the leg was

shortened in the process, and she would never walk again without a disfiguring limp. Fortescue had been all attention during her illness. He had sent her flowers, and fruit, and books, and called continually to inquire after her progress, but now that she was better he found the public thought he had not done enough. All this time he had not spoken more explicitly to Cecelia Murray. He thought the trouble at home precluded it, and he had been very much upset and grieved himself at the misfortune he had brought upon her sister. But he heard that people, who had no inkling of his former pretensions, were saying that he ought to marry Nellie since he had ruined her matrimonial prospects for life, and that it was the only reparation he could make the girl. Outsiders had said it first, and then the artillery officers had taken up the matter and declared the honor of the battalion was concerned in his action, so Fortescue had determined to abide by the decision of his Colonel. Anything which threatens the honor of an English regiment is usually arbitrated by vote, or by the decision of the commanding officer.

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Colonel Graves received Fortescue cordially, for he was a favorite of his, and listened attentively to what he had to say. When the story of the picnic was concluded he asked Fortescue if he had any other ties.

"Are you attached to any one, my boy? Have you plighted your word, or bound yourself in any way to another woman?"

"No, sir."

"And there is no hope of this poor girl's recovery?"

"Not the slightest, I am afraid."

"Well, it seems hard to me that a fine young fellow, like yourself, should be tied to a crippled wife, and if you revolt against the idea, you will be doing the young lady an injury, as well as yourself."

"I don't understand the term 'revulsion,' sir, where a woman is concerned, but I had other intentions."

"Say you fulfilled them, do you think you could enjoy your life, knowing you had spoiled hers?"

"I don't think I could, Colonel."

"She may not accept your offer, Fortescue, but I really think, under the circumstances, you should propose to her. You have money, and a profession, and many things to make your existence enjoyable to you. She had but one, and by your carelessness you took it from her. I am quite of the opinion that you owe her this reparation."

"Very good, sir. I'll make it. The battalion shall never be able to say I did a dishonorable act, or shirked my duty."

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So he left his Colonel's presence to seek that of Mrs. Murray, and have a long interview with her daughter, Nellie. The poor little girl was looking very white and fragile after her terrible accident, and she was so weak still that when Captain Fortescue asked her to be his wife she burst into tears. Of course, she made a thousand objections on the score of her disfigurement, but Fortescue would not listen to them, and left her the happiest girl alive. But one little thing affected him during the interview. It was when Nellie innocently said, "And I have thought all the while that you preferred Cecelia. But if you had married her I think it would have killed me, for I have loved you ever since we met."

When Cecelia heard the news she refused to believe it.

"You can't know what you are talking about," she said rudely to her mother. "Captain Fortescue proposed to Elinor! Why, he is half engaged to me."

"Nevertheless, my dear, it is true, and he really owed it to her after his gross carelessness. He has lamed the poor girl for life. But he never proposed to you, surely?"

"Not exactly, but he as good as said he loved me."

"Oh, my dear, men say that kind of thing to a dozen girls at once, and you see he has chosen Nellie for his wife. They are to be married as soon as she is well enough."

"And here I have been almost snubbing Sir Andrew Ferrier for the last month, in order to give Fortescue time to speak. It is too annoying. I may have lost them both."

"No such thing, Cissy. We will send Sir Andrew an invitation to dinner, and the matter will be settled at once. The old gentleman cannot resist you, my dear. And after all, though Captain Fortescue is a fine young man, Lady Ferrier is the better-sounding title of the two. I shall be quite proud of my married daughters."

So the next news that permeated Elchester was the engagement of Miss Cecelia Murray to old Sir Andrew Ferrier, and Hugh Fortescue felt relieved to think that in doing what the battalion considered his duty he had, at least, not broken any one's heart, unless it were his own. Naturally he felt depressed for a while. He had fixed his heart on the possession of Cissy Murray and believed he should never cease to regret her loss. But when he saw how easily she consoled herself he began to think that, after all, she might not have proved so great a prize. And the truth is, that by the time he had been married to Nellie for a twelvemonth, her unselfishness and devotion to himself had so won on his affection, that he would not have exchanged his lame, but loving wife, for the most beautiful woman in England.

Too Late

By Francis Sallus Sallus

JOY stood upon my threshold mild and fair,
With lilies in her hair.
I bade her enter as she turned to go,
And she said, "No."

Fortune once halted at my ruined porch,
And lit it with her torch;
I asked her fondly, "Have you come to stay?"
She answered, "Nay."

Fame robed in spotless white before me came;
I longed her kiss to claim;
I told her how her presence I revered.
She disappeared.

Love came at last—how pure, how sweet!
With roses at her feet.
I begged her all her bounty to bestow—
She answered, "No."

Since then, Joy, Fortune, Love and Fame
Have come my soul to claim;
I see them smiling everywhere,
But do not care.

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How One Woman Helped a Village

By Mary McCreary

THE sale was over. The creditors were satisfied. The farm was sold. So were the cattle and the farm implements. There was nothing left except the furniture that was in the house.

It was an afternoon in the early spring. Catherine Hanshew stood on the porch and watched the cows, as one by one they were driven from the barnyard. The sight was almost more than she could endure. She was only seventeen. She had stood as mother to five younger brothers and sisters since she was twelve.

In an upstairs room the mother lay, a helpless paralytic. The father's grave was not yet three months old. The man who had purchased the farm kindly told the family they might occupy the house for another year. But they had nothing to depend upon except the garden. Even the wheat in the ground had been taken from them.

Catherine, like the majority of girls, could do a generality of things, but nothing as a specialty. Standing there that afternoon, she fully realized her helplessness. "Something must be done," she said. "Something just must be done."

But what? Her brain felt cramped; the blood in her veins seemed cold; her heart pained as if some giant hand were stretching its fibres. She caught up an old hat and left the house. She walked on thinking, or, at least, trying to think. She had no relatives to look to for advice. The physician had cautioned her against telling her troubles to her mother. It looked as if the family must separate, but she could not bear the thought of having the children brought up by strangers.

The farm lay in a valley of the Allegheny Mountains in Pennsylvania. She was walking along a common contiguous to the mountain. "If we lived near a large town," she said, "I could find some employment. One reads of so many openings for women in cities. Or if it were later in the year I might try my hand at making preserves and jellies, but in this season and place there is absolutely nothing for me to do."

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She sat down. Trailing arbutus bloomed at her feet. How cozy the little pink and white petals looked in their beds of leaves. Her father's last words came into her mind: "Be strong, and show yourself a true woman." The thought lifted her soul. She would be strong. She sat there until it grew dark. Then she went home. She had an idea, an inspiration had come to her.

The next morning she sent her oldest brother to the nearest town for empty thread-boxes. She wanted at least fifty.

The boxes came—a hand-cart full of them. Then she went to the mountain and gathered arbutus. She took it home, assorted it, lined the thread-boxes with white, filmy paper, filled each box with flowers, dampened them with water and closed the boxes.

There were stacks of newspapers in the garret. She searched in them for names of fashionable city people. She found articles describing balls and weddings, and the persons in attendance. She selected a number of ladies' names and addressed the boxes to them. Of course, she did not know the streets and numbers, but the city was not one of the largest, and she believed the majority of the names would be known to the postal officials. She also wrote a brief letter to each one of the ladies stating that she should be glad to fill orders from them for arbutus, and named the price for which it could be delivered.

The following Sabbath was Easter. By the Thursday preceding she had thirty-seven orders to fill.

When the season for arbutus was over, the kalmia, or mountain laurel, and the fragrant swamp honeysuckles bloomed. She sent out samples of these flowers, and in return secured a number of orders. These flowers were not so profitable as the arbutus. Being hardwood plants, it was more difficult to put them in the boxes.

The rhododendrons, with their carmine and lilac flowers, and their dark green, leathery leaves, paid better.

Next she secured catalogues from a number of seminaries and colleges for women. The beautiful waxy pipsissewa seems to bloom especially for commencement week. The racemes of this plant compare favorably with the lily-of-the-valley, and command a higher price, being rarer. She addressed samples of these flowers to the senior classes. This was her most profitable venture.

During the remainder of the summer she was idle, but when fall came she added to her list of names and sent out specimens of ferns for winter house plants. She also offered a wild vine, known as the American ivy, for a climbing plant in yards.

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Just before the holiday season she had circulars printed, stating that she would furnish an evergreen vine, locally called the spruce vine, for Christmas decorations. Also lichens, to carpet yards around Christmas trees. These circulars she mailed to the ladies who had bought her flowers during the summer.

She got an idea also from the public craze for odd and artistic things. She was skillful with the handsaw. She practiced making flower boxes for lawns and yards. These were made from pieces of hollow trees, odd-shaped sticks and rock-oak bark. The more uncommon the material and design, the more salable the boxes. One box, unmatched in design and beauty, she made of laurel roots. Some she coated with shellac, others she varnished.

She prospered. The next year she rented a small room in the city and opened a store. Her specialty was furnishing boxes for plants, and selling ferns, vines and lichens, and taking orders for wild cut flowers. She gained the confidence of some wealthy families, and became known as a skillful yard and lawn decorator. In this she met with little competition, and it is now her specialty. Her sister became an adept in superintending the decorations of houses and churches for special occasions. The two girls, working together, accomplished great things. Their business ventures prospered; they did not scatter their energies, though Catherine had now many ideas. They kept close to the line they had marked out for themselves.

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Catherine not only helped herself, but she gave inspiration to the whole village. She jotted down in a note-book every idea that came to her of helpful lines of woman's work. To a poor neighbor who had to support herself, Catherine suggested that she should gather wild cherries and make a cordial. This found a sale in the city in a store where foods for invalids were sold.

When Mrs. Palmer was left a widow, with no capital and several small children to maintain, Catherine again came to the rescue. The galls growing on different species of the oak contain an acid called gallic, and really tannic acid in another form. It is used by photographers as a fixing agent. Catherine, in her studies and botanic researches, had come across this fact and remembered it, to Mrs. Palmer's great profit. An additional income came from sending to the city snake-root, pipsissewa, wintergreen and other medicinal plants which grew wild in the neighborhood.

When the bank failed and Miss Clare, an elderly spinster of the neighborhood, found herself penniless, she came to Catherine for advice. Miss Clare said a relative had offered her a home, but she preferred to cast a line for herself, if it were possible. Here Catherine's "Emergency Note-Book," as she called it, came to her rescue. Catherine called Miss Clare's attention to the great thickets of the robinia, or locust, that grew in the mountains. The young trees, Catherine knew, were in great demand by farmers for planting along fences. "They are rapid growers," she said; "they do not shade the fields to any great extent, and make valuable posts." At Catherine's suggestion Miss Clare started in among the farmers in the valley and took orders for the trees. She was successful almost from the first, and she now has greatly extended the field of her work. She travels among the farmers during the whole summer and winter months taking orders. In tree-planting time she hires men to dig out the young trees and ship them to different parts of the country.

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An eccentric old woman in Belham, where Catherine went for a week's vacation, was left a widow. It was generally believed she would come upon the county for support. Not so. She possessed a strong, independent will. She took a hint from Catherine, who had noted that visitors from the city gathered the whorled leaves of the Balm of Gilead fir for pillows. She had read that chairs were decorated with head-rests, and instructed her *protégé* to make a number of these, filling them with the leaves of the fir. These were carried a number of miles to a mountain resort and sold to the ladies staying there. Every summer this woman now makes money—not a great deal, indeed, but enough to keep her, with some other ideas furnished by the fertile brain of Catherine.

Catherine, as the lines of her life broadened, claimed more and more—and she seemed to prove it, too—that when it is absolutely necessary a woman can make a living in any part of this great country of ours. But to succeed, a woman must have force of character, tireless energy, and the willingness and courage to venture into untried fields.

Down on the Suwanee River

MEMORIES OF A SUNSET IN GEORGIA

By Sir Edwin Arnold

IN THAT part of the long journey when we were passing through Georgia, and at the moment when the tedium was worst, the train approached a long hollow in the hills where one of those pleasant surprises occurred which go to prove how song may consecrate a locality. A river, not very broad nor deep, but with a certain special grace and character of its own, lay in front of our track. We had a good view of it as we came near the wooden trestle bridge by which the line was carried across—structures which, until you become acclimatized to American travel, always make you wonder whether they will carry the train this time safely over.

The river ran down from the Georgian hills in a lively current, broken sometimes into rapids and little cataracts where the red and black rocks lay across its channel, and then widening out into picturesque reaches bordered by thickets of dark green foliage and clumps of cypress and willow. In the clearings, here and there between the woods which bordered it, stood isolated negro cottages, around which you could see little black children at play, and the invariable pig, which is the house guest of the negro in that part of the country. A punt was gliding along on the quiet part of the stream, with a negro on board dragging a fishing-line, and the black buzzards circled over the maize fields. It was not a striking scene, but beautiful in its way, gilded as it was by the rays of a magnificent sunset. Yet I should have forgotten it in a few minutes, as I had forgotten the many other rivers which the train had traversed, had it not been that I happened to ask the conductor what was the name of this particular water.

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Quite carelessly he answered: "That's the Suwanee River, mister!" The Suwanee River! In a moment the stream had for me a new and extraordinary interest. I had not even known there was such a river in geographical reality, or that it flowed through Georgia; and yet here it was—real, authentic, alive—leaping down through the Southern forests, past the maize fields and the cotton flats, to pour itself into the Gulf of Mexico.

In an instant everything around appeared to be full of the song that all the world sings: "Way Down Upon de Suwanee Riber." The live oaks seemed to wave it in the evening air; the stream seemed to sing it as it bustled over the rocks; the birds in the thickets had it in the soft musical notes we caught, and the crickets and katydids, beginning their sunset chirrup, joined in the half-heard chorus. The journey was no longer monotonous. To be "way down upon de Suwanee Riber" was to have come to a corner of America dedicated to that deep emotion of our common humanity—the love of home. Is there anybody who has not felt the charm of the simple negro melody?

"When I was playin' wid my brudder
Happy was I,
O, take me to my kind old mudder,
Dar let me lib and die.
All de world am sad and dreary
Eberywhere I roam;
O, darkies, how my heart grows weary,
Far from de old folks at home."

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There, indeed, were the old folks at home: a white-haired darky sitting on a log by the cottage door stripping maize-cobs, and, shambling about among the pigs and poultry, old Dinah, with a yellow bandanna on her silver locks, crooning some song, which might, perhaps, be the song of the river. So, after all, it was real! and there was a Suwanee River, and the sunny peace and beauty of it were just what fitted well with the sentiment of that touching and tender air, which has gone all through the world because it holds in its unaffected music the secret of the pathetic retrospect of life. Just the spot it was to which a tired man, be he negro or otherwise, might look back with attachment and affection. We travelers coming suddenly upon it, and leaving it at thirty miles an hour, had, of course, nothing but the most flitting concern with "de Suwanee Riber." But one could imagine how dear it might be to a native born, and how sincere the original emotion was of the song-writer, or else of some darky from whom he borrowed it, to write and to set to such soft and sympathetic music. "Dar's where my heart is turning ebber." No one who has not seen the river as we saw it, with the soft hallowed light of a glorious sunset upon it, can appreciate to the full the meaning and message of the song.

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Henceforward for me that Georgian stream, with the dark groves fringing it, and the red crags, and the quiet reaches of silver water gilded by the setting sun, has a place in the thought among the famous rivers of the globe, and I never hear the melancholy music of the popular negro lament without a new feeling of what song can do, far beyond history and important events, to consecrate a spot in Nature forever, and to localize a universal sentiment. I, too, have been "way down upon de Suwanee Riber." I, too, have absorbed the atmosphere of the place with all its poetry and romance, and often in the sweetness of dusk do I feel it all again.

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* * *

Getting Back to Nature

THE pressure of modern civilization has made us artificial. We have turned our backs on Nature. We stifle all our impulses. We strain every natural act through the sieve of society's requirements. Certain of Nature's gymnastics, simple physical reflex actions for the preservation, purifying and toning of the body, we have cut off because they do not seem to us to be "good form." But Nature knew what she was about. Man to-day does not laugh, he smiles. There is little physical pleasure in his enjoyment of a jest, it has become all intellectual. Man seems to have outwitted Nature, for Nature meant this enjoyment to have a salutary effect throughout the whole body. "Laughing," says a scientist, "consists essentially in an inspiration succeeded by a whole series of short, spasmodic expirations. The glottis is freely open during the whole time, and the vocal chords are thrown into lively vibrations." Physiologists say there is not a single part of the body that does not feel the stimulating effect of a hearty laugh. The ripples of new life that come from this laugh strike through the entire body, like ripples in a brook excited by a stone thrown into the water. In laughing, one draws a full, deep breath, and throws it out in interrupted, short and audible installments. The convulsion of the diaphragm is the principal part of the physical manifestation, but its true effect permeates every part of the entire body in a salutary way.

Sneezing is another reflex action that is tabooed by society. They tell you that in order that you may not sneeze in public, you must so control yourself that you do not sneeze in private—but sneezing is really only another of Nature's safeguards. It acts automatically. It never comes without being needed. It is salutary. "Sneezing not only rids the nasal cavity of foreign substances, but acts in a special way upon the general and especially the cerebral circulation. For the respiratory centre in the medulla is in close proximity to the vaso-motor centre of the brain, whereby the pulse is quickened, the blood-pressure is increased, and the blood-vessels of the brain are dilated. Nature foresaw man's needs, and made the sneeze to act as an automatic stimulus to the brain."

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Nothing man does in life is more perfectly instinctive and natural than to yawn. In the economy of Nature it has but one use, and one purpose: it is a gymnastic. When the body has lain motionless for some time, as in sleep, or when the powers are at a low ebb through fatigue, drowsiness or ennui, something is required to restore the system to a state of general activity. For this emergency Nature provides this involuntary series of movements called yawning. The yawn embodies all the laws of growth needed for movements to give physical growth and refreshment, and some of the laws necessary to the higher growth in calls on the emotions and intellect. "A good yawn is always slow, and at its best uses every articulation in the body, probably every muscle, and possibly refreshes every individual nerve."

We are told that when the body is fatigued we should never "stretch." Man says it is not "good form," but Nature thinks it is. When we wake in the morning, or when we are especially tired, there is the impulse to "stretch," which may be controlled or held in check by the will, but under these conditions Nature intended us to "stretch." The child does it naturally after sleep. All animals do it, as is commonly shown by a dog or a cat when awakened from a nap. Students of natural science note it in every department of animal life. Stretching is a mild massage. During sleep, or when we are very tired, the extensor or straightening muscles become extended, and the flexor or bending muscles proportionately contracted. When we stretch our limbs we simply adjust in a wondrous way the relaxation of the muscles before commencing to exercise them.

In time of sorrow, of trial, or as a relief from a multitude of petty cares and worries, Nature comes to the rescue with tears. Tears may be the mental or physical salvation of the individual many times during his life. When a person is in sorrow her friends say, "Now, dry up your tears; don't cry." We should never attempt to check the tears from the outside—that is, to check the tears themselves; we should try to get the individual into a more hopeful frame of mind by presenting a way out of the sorrow; then the tears will disappear, because they are no longer needed to give relief to the mind. They have served their purpose, and the changed mood requires no tears. It is as the rain-drops disappear, and the storm ceases at the bursting forth of the sun. A "good cry" occasionally is a wonderful relief. It is like a good, strong, thunder-shower. It clears the atmosphere. Frequent crying at every little care or trouble takes away from the helpfulness of the tears. It ceases to be a thunder-shower with its stimulation. It becomes but a drizzle with its depression.

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All these actions are Nature's safety-valves. We should be careful how we defy Nature by closing them. Society's decisions are often based on right, and are often of great value, but we should be careful that blind worship of "good form" does not shorten our lives and shut our eyes to Nature as a teacher and revealer.

We also defy Nature by our irregularity in living. Nature is a great believer in schedules. She sends her birds South for the winter on a given day, and has them return to spend the spring and summer in the North almost with the accuracy of a calendar. She has her different flowers open at certain hours in the morning and close at certain hours in the evening. Nature has established office hours for her plants. After hours they rest. Nature keeps the average of climate in every community wonderfully regular. If the temperature for a given place were taken a certain number of times a day for a year, we would find that the changes between the average of one year and the average of another year would hardly be more than a degree. If it fell five degrees, plant life would die. Nature shows wonderful wisdom in her regularity, and she preaches to man wondrous sermons on living. Regularity always implies obedience to some law—irregularity, disobedience. The body of each individual is so constructed that every day at a given time his stomach is ready to act upon food, then automatically the vital juices of the stomach are poured forth to convert food into bone, muscle and sinew, and to give a healthy color to the cheek and brightness to the eye. If man is too late for his appointment with the stomach the secretions do not act promptly when he suits his whimsical pleasure to invite them again to dine with him, and he becomes a victim of the great American scourge, dyspepsia. This may come, too, from his over-eating or his under-eating, or from any other irregularity in this direction. Nature is merciless to offenders. Nature is kind when we obey her laws, and merciless when we disobey.

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The same regularity can be shown in the matter of sleeping. Man should have regular hours for doing work. The great intellectual lights of the world, for the most part, live to advanced age. Work, mental or physical, does not kill. It is the demon of worry that lines the face with furrows of age. It is the erratic comets, whose lives are irregular, who die young. Let us accept Nature as the great teacher. Let us emulate her in her regularity and carry it into our life and conduct. Let us act in rebellion and protest against all that is artificial and fictitious. Let us get down to the best, simple, natural, sincere and helpful living for ourselves individually, and as members of that great syndicate of individuals called society. Then we will begin to realize the fullness and the possibility of what life may really mean. We will see how we have misspelled, misread and mistranslated our message, because we did not keep close to Nature, who is ever ready to help us interpret it. We blindly throw upon Nature and the God of Nature the blame for much of the sin and sorrow of life. If we were to open our eyes we would see that much of the darkness and pain of life is preventable and comes from our disobedience of Nature's laws.

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William's Invitation From the Mayor

THE young man had been to sea on a long cruise, and on his return was narrating to his uncle, an old Montgomeryshire farmer, an adventure which he had met with on board ship. "I was one night leaning over the taffrail, looking down into the ocean," he said, "when my gold watch fell from my fob, and immediately out of sight. The ship was going ten knots an hour, but, nothing daunted, I sprang over the rail, down, down, and after a long search found the watch, came up, and chased the ship, and climbed back to the deck without any one knowing I had been absent."

"William," said his uncle, "I believe thee; but there's many a thousand would not."

"What!" exclaimed William, "you are politely insinuating that I'm a liar."

"William," said the old man gravely, "thee knows I never call anybody names; but if the Mayor of Welshpool were to come and say, 'Josiah, I want thee to find the biggest liar in all Montgomeryshire,' I would come to thee and put my hand upon thy shoulder, and say to thee: 'William, the Mayor wants to see thee.'"

Religious Thought

What a Christian Life Means

By Cardinal Gibbons

WHAT constitutes the Christian life? The best answer to this question might well be found in the words of the Apostle Saint James. "Religion, clean and undefiled before God and the Father, is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their tribulation: and to keep one's self unspotted from this world." Religion and Christian life are identical.

The Gospels present facts, doctrines, precepts, maxims, spirit, which are the foundation, development and inspiration of a life other than the merely human and natural. A Christian abides by those facts, accepts those doctrines, tries to obey those precepts, and aims to live by that spirit. It is more than faith in Christ—more than the practice of what He enjoins. It is a happy union of both wherein faith informs and dominates, and good works or observance of the commandments receives merit and value from the faith. In other words the Christian life is one of faith, hope and love. The Christian accepts the teachings of Christ and the Apostles with the spirit of Saint Peter: "Thou hast the words of eternal life." He is strengthened by the assurances which Christ imparts, and the hopes He gives: "Every one that liveth, and believeth in Me, shall not die forever." And he never forgets, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." His efforts will always tend so that he may "reckon himself dead to sin, and alive to God in Christ Jesus." These are his principles, and these are his motives; and upon them he proceeds to build up a character and a life whose fruits are "charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, chastity," to which we may add prayer, and the public and private praise of God.

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The obligations and duties of the Christian life are not all external. They are mainly interior, and must proceed from the heart. There is no virtue in one's daily actions unless it be first established in the soul, and is only an external expression of the soul's convictions or prolongation of heartfelt sentiments.

However, as the external duties are not absolutely, and under all circumstances, essential, they vary both in number and frequency according to environments and opportunities. A business man cannot do all that a clergyman is expected to do; a man in trade not what a man of leisure can accomplish; nor a man of the world all that is possible and easy to one who keeps himself from society. But all, no matter who or where, no matter what his engagements and secular pursuits, how little or how much time he can call his own, can and are obliged to perform daily acts of prayer and religion, and accomplish many duties of virtue and charity. There is no condition of life which is incompatible with the dictates, and principles, and precepts of the Christian life.

The influence of Christian virtue, or, if you wish, Christian perfection, since to every man is said, "Be you therefore perfect, as also your Heavenly Father is perfect," must be carried into the marts of trade and into the counting-room, into the workshop and on the stage. Music, art, professions are no bar to its workings. Everywhere can we repress our tendencies, curb our passions, and master our desires and inclinations. Some, indeed, have greater temptations than others; many have severe and grave obstacles to overcome, and serious difficulties to encounter, while others have only a few, and comparatively light ones. But God "will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able: but will make also with temptation issue, that you may be able to bear it."

For that it is required that a man be strong, courageous, determined, earnest, active. We can always succeed if our will be right. We are the arbiters of our own destinies, and our own wills condemn us or raise us to the skies. God will help him who helps himself, and every one can be honest, upright, pure and conscientious if he so wills and determines, in spite of any and all temptations and circumstances.

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Words of Wisdom

GOD is not a crutch coming in to help your lameness, unnecessary to you if you had all your strength. He is the breath in your lungs. The stronger you are, the more thoroughly you are yourself, the more your need of it, the more your need of Him. —*Phillips Brooks.*

CHRISTIANITY wants nothing so much in the world as sunny people, and the old are hungrier for love than for bread, and the oil of joy is very cheap, and if you can help the poor on with a garment of praise, it will be better for them than blankets.—*Henry Drummond.*

THE pretensions which vanity sets up are not usually very high. It seldom aspires to considerations of goodness or greatness, far oftener basing its claims to admiration on a pretty face, a fine figure, a graceful bearing, a fashionable costume, a luxurious banquet, a costly dwelling. It is almost inevitable that, when people boast of such things or exhibit them ostentatiously, an impression should gain ground that they are destitute of any higher claims to consideration. If a man had genius, we think he would not value himself upon his carriage and horses; if he had force of character, he would not be proud of his tailor's skill; if he had merits of his own to stand upon, he would not try to borrow reputation from his ancestors. The very effort he makes to show off these things, and to claim a certain standing in society because of them, is of itself a kind of confession that he has nothing better to offer, and he is very naturally esteemed accordingly.

THE man who calls himself a Christian, and gives less than one-tenth of his income to the Lord, is a meaner man than Jacob, and has a lower standard than the King of Sodom, who was evidently accustomed to count the giving of tithes a duty.—*H. C. Trumbull.*

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THERE are many who hold so fast to all the forms of etiquette and ceremony that they regard infringements of them in the light of unpardonable transgressions. Observing diligently themselves all the social usages of their time, or their particular circle, they exact the same punctilious obedience from others, and attribute any defection to real and intentional incivility and disrespect. On the other hand, there are those who despise these outward forms of politeness as hypocritical and servile—who will give no titles, show no deference, obey no rules. They value sincerity, they say, and will pretend to nothing that they do not feel; they cherish the spirit of good will, but despise the letter. What the former regard as a rightful respect they stigmatize as obsequiousness; what the former shun as rudeness they dignify as sincerity and independence. It is not so much that each of these go to opposite extremes in their views as that they both consider the matter superficially, though, of course, from opposite surfaces. Neither one has penetrated into the real signification of manners, or into the sources from which rules of politeness flow.

PRIDE often miscalculates, and more often misconceives. The proud man places himself at a distance from other men. Seen through that distance, others, perhaps, appear little to him; but he forgets the self-evident truth that this very distance causes him to appear equally little to others.

THE home is the sunniest side of every great people. Without devotion to home there can be no devotion to country. The home is the cradle of good citizenship and patriotism; it is the foundation of happiness, not only to individuals, but to nations as well, and it is the one spot on earth that should be guarded from needless shadows.

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TRUTH has many powerful enemies against which to struggle, and to which it is too often sacrificed. Fear, passionate desire, envy, malice, greed, shame, and a host of other emotions come into conflict with truth, and prove its deadly foes. When they take possession of the mind, justice departs and truth is often ruthlessly stricken down. It has, however, another opponent, which is less apparent and less open to criticism, but not less effective in its assaults. This is the desire of being forcible, emphatic, of creating an impression of being interesting in conversation, brilliant in writing, eloquent in oratory, successful in debate. These are all good things, and worthy of being striven for in their respective places. At first sight it does not appear that they need ever interfere with truth or demand that she be sacrificed to them. Yet they often do, and the reason is not far to seek. The desire for forcible utterance tends toward emphasizing only one side of the question, whereas truth is many-sided. He who would tell a good story is strongly tempted to exaggeration, whereas a faithful adherence to truth would moderate or tone down his remarks, taking away, perhaps, much of their sparkle and brilliance. Those who love to shine in conversation have a dread of the commonplace, whereas truth is often very commonplace, and it should be so recognized. Thus there is a collision, and the stronger desire is generally victorious.

MAKE a rule, and pray God to help you to keep it, never, if possible, to lie down at night without being able to say, "I have made one human being, at least, a little wiser, a little happier, or a little better this day." You will find it easier than you think, and pleasanter.—*Charles Kingsley.*

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BE CHEERFUL at home. A single bitter word may disquiet an entire family for a whole day; one glance cast a gloom over the household; while a smile, like a gleam of sunshine, may light up the darkest and weariest hours. Like unexpected flowers which spring up along our path, full of freshness, fragrance and beauty, so do kind words, and gentle acts, and sweet dispositions make glad the home where peace and blessing dwell. No matter how humble the abode, if it be thus garnished with grace, and sweetened with kindness and smiles, the heart will turn lovingly toward it from all tumults of the world; if it be ever so homely, it will be the dearest spot beneath the circuit of the sun.

Favorite Works of Famous Writers

CONFESSIONS OF GREAT AUTHORS

DICKENS considered David Copperfield his best novel, says a writer in the St. Louis Globe-Democrat. In conversation he once declared that next to it in originality came the Pickwick Papers, and after them Oliver Twist. A waiter in a country inn once brought him Dombey and Son to read, not knowing, of course, who he was. He said he read a few chapters, but could get up little interest. Scott believed that Waverley was his best novel, and The Lady of the Lake his best poem. He and the Ballantynes had more than one lively discussion on the subject, but he would never change opinion. He knew The Lady of the Lake by heart, and once repeated the whole to prove the fact.

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George Eliot is said to have best enjoyed the writing of Romola. "I wrote it under the inspiration of the scenes themselves." Holland found in Katrina his choicest thoughts. There is reason to believe that this poem contained much of his own biography and experience. Campbell liked his first work, The Pleasures of Hope, better than any other, and of his shorter poems he thought The Soldier's Dream was the best. Goldsmith rested his reputation on The Deserted Village. He said that the subject interested him more nearly than any other that ever engaged his pen. Defoe expected his fame to rest on his political writings, and did not appear to attach much importance to Robinson Crusoe. Adam Smith, the author of The Wealth of Nations, regarded his book with the genuine love of an author. He was often seen reading it with pleasure. Butler was never satisfied with his Hudibras. He once said that, were he more happily situated in life, he could write much better than he had done in this poem.

Shelley, in a letter to a friend, intimates that Queen Mab was his best, but hints also that he expects to do much better in the future, as he has a better subject. Isaac Watts prided himself on a very dull treatise, The Improvement of the Mind, and seems to have thought little of the hymns that are now sung in every English-speaking land. Locke fancied that he was a great writer on the subject of education, and seems to have valued his educational writings more highly than he did the Essays on the Human Understanding. Richardson said, when speaking of one of his works, "I shall never be able to excel Pamela."

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Boswell was too great a dunce to know how good his Life of Johnson really was. So far as known, he wrote it simply to gratify his itch for writing, and had no idea of its excellence. Gray once said that no one would ever write a better poem than his Elegy. He considered it not only his own masterpiece, but the best poem in the English or any other language. Grote once compared his History of Greece to Gibbon's Decline and Fall, and took pains to point out the various excellencies of each, and to show in what particulars his own work excelled that of Gibbon. Bulwer Lytton was conservative in expressing his opinion of his own works, but on one occasion he admitted that he thought his novel, What Will He Do With It? to contain his best ideas.

Longfellow was slow to talk about his own poetry, but from hints given by his biographers, it is evident that he considered Evangeline as his best, and his translation of Dante as second in point of merit. Many of his admirers will agree with him as to the first, few as to the second. He once said: "If I were to rewrite Hiawatha I would use a different metre." Swift never talked about his writings, and seemed to regard them merely as a means to an end, this being his own personal advancement. The Tale of a Tub got into print without the knowledge or consent of the author, but Swift had sufficient regard for his own fame to publish a correct edition as soon as he read the garbled version that at first appeared.

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Bryant always thought he could write much better poetry than that contained in his Thanatopsis, which was one of his earliest. During his later days he on several occasions expressed some surprise at the preference shown by his admirers for this particular poem, "when I have done so many things better." He believed the translations of Homer to be the best work he ever did. Owen Meredith rested his fame on Lucile, but could never be induced to contradict the charges of plagiarism that were made in connection with it. "What's the use?" he said. "If I deny them, people will believe there is something in them. If I say nothing at all, the book will be read and the charges ignored or forgotten." He was proud of the poem, and in the circle of his intimate friends often quoted passages from it, and described the circumstances under which these lines were written.

Young's judgment of his own works has been confirmed by posterity. He regarded The Night Thoughts on Life, Death and Immortality as his masterpiece. In another respect, however, he was woefully mistaken. He said: "If I had not written The Night Thoughts I would still be remembered by my prose writings." Ninety-nine people in a hundred who have read The Night Thoughts are not aware that he wrote anything in prose, so completely have his literary, political and doctrinal writings passed out of the public mind.

Wordsworth considered The Excursion his best, and next to it The White Doe of Rylstone. Wordsworth said that when he first thought seriously of being a poet he looked into himself to see how he was fitted for the work, and seemed to find there "that first great gift, the vital soul," a statement which shows that, whatever other people may think of him, he had a passably fair opinion of himself. He frequently expressed his opinion of his own poetry, and once said that he had widened the domain of the poet over a whole field deemed irreclaimable. Milton regarded Paradise Regained as infinitely superior to Paradise Lost, and once expressed great surprise that any one should entertain a contrary opinion. He said that of all his works the poem, On the Morning of Christ's Nativity, was the best. It was his earliest, being written in 1629, when he was twenty-one years of age.

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Cowper's Task is now dull reading, but its author believed that it had immortalized his name. Of his shorter poems he preferred John Gilpin to all the others, and in this judgment posterity has agreed with him. Addison was always proud of the character of Sir Roger de Coverley, and considered that the papers of the Spectator developing the good qualities and foibles of the old knight were the best literary work he ever did. Thompson always declared that he had done his best on The Castle of Indolence, a poem that is now known only by name. He said that The Seasons was written in a hurry, and did not represent his best thoughts. Thomas Fuller thought that his poem, David Hainous Sinne, Heartie Repentance and Heyvie Punishment, was his masterpiece, and hoped that it would go down the ages with the great poems of antiquity.

Dr. Johnson regarded himself as immortalized by the dictionary, but considered that The Rambler really contained his best thoughts. As an author he is now almost unknown; as a talker only is he remembered. Sterne was best pleased with his sermons. There is no indication in his biography that he regarded Tristram Shandy as other than a piece of work for a bookseller. The sermons are never heard of, but Tristram is still with us. Byron is said to have preferred Childe Harold to all his other works. He said it contained more of his heart history than all the others combined. He seems to have regarded it as Dickens did David Copperfield, as his own biography. Fielding's Tom Jones was his favorite, and after that he seemed to think that Don Quixote in England was the next in order of merit. Coleridge thought that Tom Jones was one of the most perfect plots ever planned.

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Moore thought Lalla Rookh was his best, but relied on his songs to carry his name down to posterity. He was fondest of the Irish melodies, and sang them to perfection in a rich voice that brought out the full significance of every word. Thackeray always alluded to his books in a half-comic, half-satiric vein, and would rarely express any preference, speaking in a contemptuous strain of them all. His friends believed, however, that he regarded Vanity Fair as his best; one says because it paid him best. Pope deemed the Essay on Man his most polished production, but was so fond of revising his poetry that the printed copy contained almost one marginal note for every line. If his wishes had been fully carried out the second edition would have been practically a new work.

Burns liked Tam O'Shanter as well as anything he ever wrote, and yet this inimitable poem was composed in order that Alloway Kirk might not be left out of a collection of Scottish ruins that an antiquarian was making. In general the poet spoke rather contemptuously of his own writings. Steele said that The Lying Lover was the best piece of writing he ever did. He did not seem to think much of his essay work on the Spectator. Most of it was done very hastily and went to the printer without revision of any kind. He regarded it as too ephemeral to be worthy of correction. Tennyson would not talk about his poetry, but once intimated that he regarded the Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington as containing more inspiration than some of the others. He once said that he did not expect much of the Charge of the Light Brigade, and was greatly surprised at its reception. Cooper once said that The Spy was his best-written novel. Elizabeth Browning always regarded Aurora Leigh as her best. Whittier regarded his War Lyrics as the best of all his writings. Hume thought more of his Essays than he did of his History of England. Smollet agreed with posterity in considering Roderick Random as his best. Franklin thought more of Poor Richard's Almanac than of all his other works. James Russell Lowell thought Among My Books his most creditable performance. Emerson said: "I put my whole soul into my Essays. They represent my literary life." Bayard Taylor was said to esteem Ximena above anything else he had written. Prescott is said to have regarded the Conquest of Peru as his master performance. Robert Browning is said to have greatly preferred The Ring and the Book to any of his other works.

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Mrs. Stowe always admitted that she could not do better than in Uncle Tom's Cabin. Buckle was too modest to express an opinion of the merits of the book he never lived to finish. Bancroft prided himself on his History of the United States, which, after all, is but a fragment. Washington Irving once confided to a friend that the Salmagundi contained his best thoughts. Hallam thought that his Literature of Europe was one of the most exhaustive treatises ever written. Motley considered the Rise of the Dutch Republic by far the most profound of all his historical writings. Halleck prided himself especially on Marco Bozzaris, which he once said had the genuine ring of poesy.

Gibbon declared that when the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire was completed, "I felt my fame to be secure." Baxter said that he put his entire religious experience and the whole of the Bible into The Saints' Everlasting Rest. Hobbes believed that when he had finished The Leviathan he had begun the revolutionizing of the world's thought. Cowley regarded The Mistresse as his best. It was a collection of love poems, and is now almost entirely forgotten. Sir Thomas More was very proud of the Life of Edward V, and left no mention of his estimate of the Utopia. Keats seemed to regard Endymion as his best, though one of his biographers says that he spoke very well of Hyperion. Bailey, the author of Festus, said that the book was his life, and contained the whole experience of the human race. And this poem, which has been cut up into quotations almost line for line, has never been equaled by any of the author's later works.

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Burke thought most of his Vindication of Natural Society. His speeches he regarded as means, not as ends in themselves. Froude believed that his History of England would better stand the test of criticism than any of his works. Jeremy Taylor is said by a contemporary to have devoutly believed that no better sermons existed in any language than his own. Allison had a stalwart opinion of his own merits. In speaking of his History of Europe he said, "That work will never die." Wycliffe was one of the most modest of men. After his translation of the Bible was finished he simply said, "I hope it will do good." Lamb thought that the description given by him of the origin of roast pig, in the Essays of Elia, was the best thing he ever wrote. Coleridge regarded the Lectures on Shakespeare as his best literary and critical effort, and the Ancient Mariner his best poem.

De Quincey, author of The Confessions of an Opium Eater, once said that he expended more thought on the Logic of Political Economy than on all the rest of his books. Herrick prided himself on his Hesperides and not at all on his sermons. He once said: "I preach for pay and write poetry for love." Montgomery rested his fame on his Pelican Island, a work now forgotten, and thought little of the hymns by which he is best remembered. Hazlitt thought that his Characters of Shakespeare's Plays better deserved consideration from the reading public than any of his other writings. Felicia D. Hemans said that when she had finished Bernardo del Carpio she was better satisfied with herself than she had ever been at the conclusion of any other work.

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Napoleon's Red Spectre

By John W. Wright

THAT Napoleon I was a remarkable personage, taken all around, goes without saying; the greatest General of modern, or, perhaps, of any times, yet withal a wonderful combination of strong-mindedness and weak groveling to superstitious fancies. As some writer has said, "He was all star and destiny." This star seems to have been the ruling omen of his entire career. Its twinklings nerved him at the battle of the Pyramids and beckoned him on to the expedition to Moscow; and even though that turned out to be one of the most disastrous moves he ever made, he never lost faith in the omen for a single instant. I shall never forget how absorbed I became in reading Rapp's account of the great General's abstraction when gazing on his star of destiny from his palace window.

"Look there; up there!" said Napoleon.

"I see nothing but the pale, twinkling stars," returned Rapp quietly.

"What!" exclaimed the Emperor, excitedly, "is it possible that you do not see my star—the fiery red one, almost as large as the moon? It is before you now, and oh, how brilliant!" Then, warming up at the sight, he fairly shrieked as he cried out: "It has never abandoned me for a single instant; I see it on all great occasions; it commands me to go forward; it is my sign of good fortune, and where it leads I will follow." Rapp said that he fairly screamed as he uttered the words, "I will follow," and that his face was livid as he seated himself in confusion and suppressed excitement.

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Whether or not the Red Spectre visited Napoleon that night after Rapp retired, we are not informed. It is known, however, that a spirit, dressed in red and shaped like a man, visited him on several occasions when the star was shining with unwonted brightness. The last time this spectral apparition appeared to the Emperor was on January 1, 1814, when he came to the great General's palace and asked admission of the guards. Early in the morning of that day Napoleon shut himself up in his cabinet, bidding Count Mole, then Counselor of State and afterward Grand Judge of the Empire, to remain in an adjoining room and to admit no one to the Royal presence. Hardly had an hour passed before an individual, fantastically dressed in red trousers, blouse and cap, appeared in the hallway. He was halted by the guard just as Mole appeared. When informed that the Emperor must not be interrupted, the Red Man grew impatient and declared he must see Napoleon, and him alone.

"I must see him. Tell him the Red Man is waiting for an audience." Trembling violently and awed almost to speechlessness at the imperious and commanding tone of the red apparition, Mole again tiptoed to the door of the Royal chamber and announced the presence of the Red Man. Napoleon, "the man of iron," blanched as white as a ghost; his arms dropped nerveless to his side, allowing a costly mirror which he was holding in his hands to fall and break into a million of pieces as they did so. Although the announcement had completely unnerved him, he managed to give orders for the unwelcome guest to be admitted. After the door was closed, Mole held his ear to the door, and, as he afterward attested on oath, heard the conversation.

"General," said the Red Spectre, "this is the third time I have appeared before you as a man. The first time we met was in Egypt, at the battle of the Pyramids; the second, after the battle of Wagram. On the occasion of our meeting at Wagram I granted you four more years in which to terminate the conquest of all Europe or to make a general peace, threatening that if you did not perform one of these two things within the allotted time, I would withdraw my protection from you. Now I am come for the third and last time to warn you that you have but three short months of power. In three months from this hour the Allies will be invading Paris if you do not take my advice and sue for peace. A general peace must be perfected within ninety days, else your power will be confined to a small, bleak island of the sea; so remember, all will be over with you if you do not achieve or accede to peace."

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In vain did Napoleon expostulate with this cardinal spectre, who sat with as much ease in the presence of the great Emperor as the Emperor himself would in the presence of his most common subject. "It will be entirely out of the question to either conquer or make peace on honorable terms in the short space of three months," he said. "Do as you please," returned the Red Man, "but I will not change my resolution. Now I go," he said, as he opened the door and strode down the hall, followed by the Emperor and Mole, who pretended to have been standing on guard at the second door from the room in which the remarkable conversation had been held. His Imperial Majesty begged of the Red Man to stay, but all to no purpose. "Three months—no longer," shouted the spectre, as he disappeared at the end of the hall.

March 13, 1814, a little less than three months after the red ghost's visit, the Allies were in Paris and Napoleon's abdication followed four days later, when all his possessions were wrested from him, and he, the great Napoleon, made sovereign over the miserable little island of Elba—the same the Red Man had held up to the mind's eye of the great General in the prophetic conversation on January 1. The main points in the remarkable narration as given above are from official documents, signed by both Counselor Mole and the guard, Basil de Migne—the former as one who had heard the prophetic conversation, and the latter as one who had attempted, without success, to bar out the Red Spectre when he first applied for admission. The court dignitaries at Paris have long been acquainted with the story of Napoleon and his famous visits from the Red Spectre, but it has never become public property.—St. Louis Republic.

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Produce of Fractions of a Penny

THE old lesson as to "Little drops of water, little grains of sand" making the universe has had one more exemplification. It is the custom of the Bank of England not to pay fractions of a penny. In the case of dividends on Government stock, these fractions have in the course of years amounted to $700,000, which amount, it is stated, was a few years ago paid over to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Stile Across Our Life

WE BOTH walked slowly o'er the yellow grass,
Beneath the sunset sky;
And then he climbed the stile—I did not pass:
And there we said good-by.

He paused one moment; I leaned on the stile,
And faced the hazy lane;
But neither of us spoke until we both
Just said good-by again.

And I went homeward to our quaint old farm,
And he went on his way;
And he has never crossed that field again
From that time to this day.

I wonder if he ever gives a thought
To what he left behind
As I start sometimes, dreaming that I hear
A footstep in the wind.

If he had said but one regretful word,
Or I had shed a tear,
He would not go alone about the world,
Nor I sit lonely here.

Alas! our hearts were full of angry pride;
And love was choked in strife;
And so the stile beyond the yellow grass
Stands straight across our life.—

Providence Journal.

* * *

The Key to the Situation

By George G. Farquhar

"BROTHER the fellow!" I muttered savagely. "Just when I'd screwed up my nerves almost to the point of putting the question, and so settling my fate one way or the other, here he must come and upset everything with his confounded 'Our dance, Miss Bellinger, I believe!' Bother the man, and his dance, too!"

My gaze followed the pair as they passed between the double row of palms toward the ballroom. For a moment the music swelled higher, and mingling with it in my ears came the silvery ripple of Joan's laughter. Then the door of the conservatory swung to behind them.

I rose from the settee, frowned witheringly at a big hydrangea bloom, and thought things not to be found in the category of polite proverbs. From this genial mood I was roused by the frou-frou of a woman's dress and a tripping footfall, which caused me to glance round quickly, half-expectantly. But it was merely my sister, Bertha.

"What's amiss, Tom?" asked she merrily. You don't look very amiable to-night."

"Don't I, indeed? Well, I feel even less cheerful than I look."

"You couldn't, Tom, dear," Bertha protested flippantly. "Come, now, what is it? Anxiety about Aunt Jane's health?"

"Oh, hang Aunt Jane!"

"Tom—Tom!" and Bertha's hands went up in simulated horror. "Your own blood-relation, too. How utterly depraved!

"Not Aunt Jane!" Bertha went on after a pause. "Then it must be Joan. That was she I saw just now with Captain Moston, wasn't it? Have you and she been falling out, or what?"

"Quite the contrary. We were getting on famously together until that conceited jackanapes carried her off."

"Why, what can you complain of in that? I suppose he simply claimed the waltz she had promised him. What are parties and dances for?"

"The only rational use of them is to keep people out of the way of those who don't want to dance. Otherwise, they're nothing but stupid circuses, in my opinion."

"Tom, you're a grumpy bear—a downright morose, irritable, surly, rude person!—and I'm sorry Uncle ever invited you down here at all. You've scarcely been twenty-four hours in the house yet, and already you show a temper—that—that—— There, Joan must be an angel to have tolerated you for five minutes!"

I did not feel called upon to find fault with the classification. My quarrel was not with Miss Bellinger—nor yet with Bertha.

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"Well," said I quickly, "this swashbuckler fellow—this army bounder—who is he, anyway?"

"Captain Moston is nothing more than a gentleman," retorted Bertha, with what she considered an air of delicate irony. "He isn't one of your sort at all, Tom."

"Whoever he may be, he needs a lesson in manners," I rejoined hotly. "The way in which he has been hanging round Miss Bellinger ever since I've been here is absolutely insufferable. Of course, you haven't noticed it; you've been upstairs with Aunt Jane all the time. But I have; and by Jove! there'll be ructions soon if——"

"Oh, now I begin to understand," interposed my sister amusedly. "That's how the wind blows, is it? You're jealous, Tom. Gracious me, it's clear you don't know Captain Moston, since you wonder at that. Just wait until you see him flirting with me. You forget you haven't had an opportunity of witnessing that yet."

"I don't care whom he flirts with, so long as it isn't Miss Bellinger," replied I. "Besides, it isn't fair to her. No man has a right to monopolize any girl as he does, unless he seriously thinks about——"

"And how do you know Captain Moston doesn't?" Bertha put in hurriedly.

"Oh, I've come across the type before—the irresistible, self-complacent, professed gallant, who never——"

Flushing scarlet, Bertha stamped her foot. "I won't listen to you! It's disgraceful! He is—he is—— At all events, I know Joan likes him—is very fond of him, in fact. She told me so herself. And if she had to choose between you and him I'm perfectly certain which she would favor." Here Bertha broke out into another high-pitched giggle. "Really, Tom, I'm almost sorry for you. If you wish to oust Captain Moston I can assure you you'll have to get up very early in the morning."

This outburst was indeed a facer for me, but I did not intend that my torment of a sister should note its effects.

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"I wish you wouldn't be so slangy, Bertha," I said reprovingly. "It shows shocking bad form in girls."

"Thanks for the benefit of the example," retorted she airily. "Only I didn't mean it for slang either. It's a piece of advice to be taken literally. I'll explain, though you don't deserve any such consideration from me, really. Now, listen to this. Every morning, before breakfast, Joan wanders off by herself through the park toward the shrubbery; and soon afterward, by an odd coincidence, Captain Moston also strolls away, but invariably in the opposite direction. Now doesn't that strike you as being somewhat significant? While you are lazying in bed—unless you have amended your habits of late—no doubt he is improving the golden opportunities. You recollect Uncle's adage, that women are apt to gauge a man's affection by his persistence, especially where —— But the waltz is over, and here comes the crowd. My poor Tom, truly I pity you!"

And with a mock-solemn shake of her head she was gone.

I mooned up into the billiard-room, where subsequently I was badly beaten by my fifteen-year-old cousin, Harold.

"Say, Tom, you're a bit off color to-night, aren't you?" he exclaimed patronizingly. "Never saw you make such a poor show in my life. But what d'you think of my play, eh? I've come on a lot lately, haven't I? Fact is, Captain Moston's been tipping me a few wrinkles the last day or two. Jolly clever chap, the Captain, you know."

I offered no comment—audibly.

"You'd better pull yourself together before you tackle him at this game," Harold continued. "On your present display you wouldn't stand a chance against him."

Whereupon the youngster entered into a glowing eulogy of the Captain's many splendid accomplishments and good qualities, a rattle to which I had neither the desire nor the patience to hearken. Incidentally, however, he happened to mention that the bedroom of the gentleman in question opened out of the same gallery as mine—was, indeed, next but one to it. Later, when I passed this particular room on my way up to bed, I chanced to observe that the key projected from the lock on the outside of the door. Ere I fell asleep I settled upon a plan.

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Waking soon after daybreak, I dressed hastily and slipped out into the corridor. Listening at the Captain's door I could hear his heavy, regular breathing within; he was still fast asleep. My fingers sought the protruding key, and softly, warily, I turned it, the bolt sliding into its socket without a sound. Now, I well knew that all the apartments in my uncle's house were fitted with patent fastenings, each having its special key, no one key opening any other lock than its own; and I flattered myself upon the tactical use to which I had been enabled to put my knowledge. Of a certainty there would be no Captain Moston at the rendezvous that morning. Exultant over the success of my stratagem, I thrust the key into my pocket and hurried downstairs.

Half an hour afterward, from the embrasure of the library window, I stood and watched Joan issue from the stone porch, cross the terrace, and wend down by the shrubberies—exactly as I had been led to expect. Myself unseen, I followed after, until she entered the ornate wooden châlet near the tennis-court. In a few minutes she reappeared with a bicycle, which she trundled down to the level, gravelly path beyond. Here she waited, tapping the ground vexedly with the toe of her boot, glancing this way and that with growing impatience. I thrust through the bushes behind her.

"How late you are!" she cried, turning round at the noise; then, seeing me, she stammered, "Oh, Mr. Varcoe, I—I expected—I thought it was some one else!"

"That's a little disappointing for both of us," I answered, biting my lip. "It was some other person you hoped to see—eh?"

"I said—expected."

"Don't you think it amounts to about the same thing," I hazarded suavely, "under the circumstances?"

"Not at all—why need it? Still, I must confess I wish you had not come just now. I didn't want to see you, nor you to see me."

I swung round as if to leave her.

"A girl never looks her best when learning to cycle," she went on. "One always feels so helpless, so awkward, at first. That's why I practice out here before the other folks are astir. And now you've found it out, and have come to laugh at me."

"I declare not," said I, returning to her side. "I hadn't the faintest idea that you were qualifying for a feminine Ixion——"

"There! Isn't that poking fun at me? Really, it's too bad! Why, Bertha told me that you yourself were an enthusiastic cyclist—almost as expert a rider as Captain Moston. You ought not to chaff nor discourage a beginner—for I do so want to learn."

Again she peered round in search of him who, to my certain knowledge, would never put in an appearance that morning.

"How annoying!" she ejaculated, pursing up her lips. "What can be keeping him? I wouldn't have given him those three dances last night if I had thought he would have failed me now. That was the condition."

"A pleasurable one, surely," I murmured, trying vainly to recollect more than one of the three dances mentioned. "To be of service to you in any way, to be with you, alone, and in——"

"Oh, must it not be delightful?" cried Joan, in ecstasy. "I can imagine nothing more glorious!"

The exclamation struck me as being somewhat incredible. Looking up in surprise, I found that she had not been paying heed to my words at all; her lips parted, she stood gazing with sparkling eyes across the greensward to where the carriage-drive wound down beneath the elm trees toward the park gates. Along this stretch of road a tandem bicycle was being ridden at a hot pace.

"Great Cæsar!" I cried, on catching sight of the distant scorchers, "that's Bertha, isn't it? And the other—no, it can't be——"

"Is Captain Moston," interposed Joan eagerly. "Every morning they go for a spin as far as Bralesley and back. Mustn't it be just glorious? The sense of freedom, of buoyancy, of swift joy, of life and power, of—of—— Oh, how I envy them!"

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"Every morning?" I repeated confusedly. "Bertha and Captain Moston? I don't think I quite understand."

"Hasn't Bertha told you? She and Captain Moston have been great friends ever so long, and they have become—— But there, now, I'm betraying strict confidences. I ought not to have said a word about it, but I made sure she would have told her own brother."

"That's her way of informing me of the fact," replied I, pointing toward the flying figures. "And, all things considered, she might have chosen a worse method. Bertha possesses more tact than I ever gave her credit for. I only hope I may hit upon as equally pleasant and original a plan for acquainting her with my engagement——"

"Your engagement!" murmured Joan, with a manifest effort to control herself that set my heart thumping for joy. "You—engaged?"

"To teach you cycling."

"I thought you meant—something else."

"Since it's clear your regular instructor will not be available to-day, may I ask you to consider my proposal, Joan?"

"It's good of you to offer, Tom. I'm afraid you'll find me a terribly backward pupil, and I know I shall never be able to get on by myself."

"Then allow me to help you. First, you place your right foot on the pedal—so; now I lift you to the saddle and keep you there firmly, securely——"

"Oh, but I didn't mean that, you stupid boy! And need you hold me quite so tightly? My other teacher did not."

"By George, I should hope not, indeed! He couldn't put his whole heart and soul into the matter as I can—that is, if I am to consider myself definitely engaged."

"Well, not definitely, Tom; say temporarily, until I see how you suit."

"With any prospect of a permanency, Joan?" asked I unsteadily. "I'm serious now, you cannot have misunderstood——"

"Oh, Tom—hold me! I'm go—go—going! There, you nearly let me tumble over that time! Why, I don't believe you're a bit abler instructor than the other one, after all. You may be stronger, and have better theories as to—— Why, here's Harold himself! Now, isn't that tiresome? Just when we were managing so nicely, too!"

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As Joan spoke, my uncle's Young Hopeful came running along the path, breathless and spent with the haste he had made.

"Awfully sorry I'm so late, Miss Bellinger," gasped he. "Some silly idiot fastened me into my bedroom this morning, and it took me an awful long time to screw off the lock with my penknife. I've a half notion it was one of Captain Moston's jokes."

"Captain Moston?" said I, my hand going instinctively into my pocket, where lay the incriminating key.

"Yes, our rooms are close together, you know—his two doors to the right of yours, just as mine is two doors to the left. But I'll find some dodge to pay him out for this lark before I'm a day older, you bet. And now, Miss Bellinger, if it isn't too late to begin——"

"I rather fancy it is, Harold," I hastened to put in.

"For me, you mean?" exclaimed he, grinning. "Well, I guessed something of the sort when I saw you here. I'd better clear out, eh? So I'll ta-ta now, and leave you. Go ahead, old chap! I never like to spoil sport."

Studies in Animal Life

How an Oriole Killed Her Family

IT HAS been claimed by observers of birds, says the Carson Appeal, that some of the feathered tribe will feed their young if they are caged, and if they fail after a certain time to release them, they will bring them a poisoned weed to eat, that death may end their captivity. About a week ago, at the Holstein ranch, the children captured a nest of three young orioles, and they were immediately caged and hung in a tree. The mother was soon about, calling her young, and in a little while brought them some worms. She continued feeding them regularly for some days without seeming to pay much attention to persons about. But on Sunday came the tragic ending that demonstrated the theory relative to birds. She brought them a sprig of green on Sunday morning and disappeared. In less than an hour they all died. The sprig was examined and proved to be the deadly larkspur, a weed that will kill full-grown cattle. The little creatures lay dead in the cage and foaming at the mouth, victims of their mother's stern resolve that her offspring should die by her own act rather than live in captivity.

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Why Cats Fall on Their Feet

WHY does a cat always fall on its feet? This is a question which, says the New York Herald, has recently absorbed the earnest attention of the French Academy of Sciences. That learned body of savants has so far failed to offer a final solution.

The subject was started in the first instance by M. Marey, a distinguished professor, who has made special analytical studies of animal movements by means of a photographic apparatus which bears his name. He had already obtained some very interesting analyses of the action of horses, dogs and sheep while in motion, when suddenly it occurred to him to place on record after the same fashion the evolutions of a falling cat. A pure white Tom was procured, and allowed to fall from a height of about three feet in front of the photographic apparatus. In a few hundredths of a second the instrument had recorded the fourteen distinct positions, which have been reproduced. It was then observed that at first the animal appears paws upward, and that then, by a series of convulsive movements, it gradually rights itself and eventually touches the ground in an upright position with all four feet simultaneously. The whole process of turning about is accomplished, so M. Marey thinks, before the animal has fallen a yard.

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When M. Marey laid the results of his investigations before the Academy of Sciences a lively discussion resulted. The difficulty was to explain how the cat could turn itself without a fulcrum to assist it in the operation. One member declared that M. Marey had presented them with a scientific paradox in direct contradiction with the most elementary mechanical principles. Without a fulcrum, without something to lean against, he declared, the cat could certainly not of itself have done what it was represented as doing. As it was quite clear from the photographs, that, as a matter of fact, the cat had righted itself while falling, it was suggested that it had done so in consequence of a rotary force, imparted to it by the hand of the experimenter. This was the view taken by MM. Loewy, Maurice Levy, Milne Edwards, Bertrand and Berthelot. M. Marey, who pointed out that there was nothing in the photographs to support such a theory, was unable to agree with his illustrious colleagues, but in order to settle the question he promised to make fresh experiment by suspending a cat from a string, which was to be cut at a given moment.

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The result of this second experiment, with the theory based upon it, will be given to the world in a memoir which is just about to be published. M. Marey's view of the matter is that there is no contradiction between the observed facts and natural law, but merely an erroneous interpretation of the latter. He admits that the cat could not turn itself without a fulcrum to assist it in doing so, but he contends that this fulcrum is in part provided by a portion of the cat's own body. It was seen by the photographs taken that in the first four positions the animal arches the vertebral column, and brings its forepaws close to its head in such a way that the moment of inertia of the forepart of the body is inferior to that of the back part. The rotation then begins, and increases until position eight is reached, when the cat, in order to complete the movement, reverses its procedure by stretching out its forepaws and drawing in the hind ones. As soon as its hindquarters have revolved in their turn, the animal extends all four paws, and on coming into contact with the ground arches its back and lifts up its tail in unmistakable gratification at its safe descent. Such is the elucidation which M. Marey gives of the phenomena to which he has drawn attention. The animal's limbs, he declares, act upon a fulcrum which its own body provides. The body, in short, is considered as composed of two parts, of which one acts as the pivot of the other.

Under the Evening Lamp

HALF HOURS WITH SONG AND STORY

How Nations Got Nicknames

By Ingeborg Raunkiær

ENGLISHMEN have submitted to the name of John Bull, as suited to the National character. A Scotsman is Sandy; the Irishman derives his name, Paddy, from his National patron saint; while an ancient nursery rhyme records the fact that Taffy was a Welshman. English sailors call the Frenchman, in contempt, Johnny Crapaud, but in France he is Jacques Bonhomme, or, as a bourgeois, Monsieur Prudhomme. Cousin Michel is the name by which the German is known to the Continental nations. Mynheer sums up the Dutch, while the Switzer rejoices in the name of Colin Tampon. Don Whiskerandos is almost a National nickname for the Spaniards, dating from Elizabethan times. Italians are known as Lazzaroni, and Danes as Danskers.

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Who Drank the First Cup of Coffee?

IN THE Bibliothéque Nationale there is a manuscript (near the end of the sixteenth century), written by an Arab, Abdelcader, who declares that coffee was drunk for the first time in Arabia in the middle of the fifteenth century. Others think that certain remarks in Persian writings imply that coffee was used in Persia as early as the ninth century, but most authors dispute these texts. It is commonly supposed that the use of coffee in its earliest home, Abyssinia, and in its second home, Arabia, is only five to six centuries old.

A legend says that the Angel Gabriel once, when Mohammed was ill, brought him a cup of coffee. Another legend says that a Mohammedan monk discovered that his goats became very lively and full of fun after they had eaten the fruit of the coffee tree. This observation caused him to make the first cup of coffee. His dervishes enjoyed the coffee, and ever afterward drank it at night to produce wakefulness when they kept vigils. Cautious historians laugh at these traditions and prefer to stand by Abdelcader's manuscript. This writer mentions an Arab, Gemaleddin, a judge in Aden, who, while traveling to Persia, or, as the historians correct the manuscript, to Abyssinia, saw people use coffee as medicine. He used it and was cured of a sickness. Later, becoming a monk, he taught his brethren the use of coffee. It was, then, in Aden that coffee-drinking originated. The fakirs even made coffee-drinking compulsory upon their neophytes. Public coffee-houses originated in Aden, and very early in history.

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Two Angels

By David Mackie

LAST year there dwelt within my home
Two angels fair,
And one did guide like counsel sweet,
And one like prayer.

And both did soothe and bear me up
When sad my life,
For one the name of mother bore,
And one of wife.

But now the radiant light has passed
Out of my sight,
And dark and lonelier are the days
With sorrow's blight.

O pure ones in that heavenly land,
Enrobed in white,
In spirit come and cheer my heart,
Now dark as night.

Till I shall lift my life-task up,
And work and pray,
Till Death and all his sorrow-clouds
Shall merge in day.

O dear babes, sleeping in your cot,
Upon you shine
The angel light of those two souls
From paths divine!

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The Brains of the Sensitive Plant

By Maturin M. Ballou

THE Sensitive Plant, which is such a delicate house ornament with us, fairly enamels the earth in Ceylon, growing wild from Adam's Peak to Point de Galle, multiplying its dainty, bell-like pink blossoms, mingled with the delicate feathery Acacia. Growing so exposed and in weed-like abundance, it is natural to suppose that it would become hardened, as it were, to rough usage, but it is not so, as it retains all its native properties in exaggerated form if possible. Our puny little hothouse specimens are not more delicate nor sensitive to the human touch than is this Ceylon Mimosa. It is the most impressible of all known plants, and is appropriately named. Curious experiments prove this. If a person will fix his eyes upon a special branch and slowly approach it, the plant is seen gradually to wilt and shrink within itself, as it were, before it is touched by the observer's hand. It is endowed with an inexplicable intelligence or instinct, and what appears to be a dread as regards rude contact with human beings. A few years since the author was at Cereto, in the island of Cuba, where he was the guest of an English physician who was also a coffee-planter. While sitting with the family on the broad piazza which formed the front of the bungalow, a thrifty Sensitive Plant was recognized and made the subject of remark. The doctor called his daughter of eleven years from the house.

"Lena," said he, "go and kiss the Mimosa."

The child did so, laughing gleefully, and came away. The plant gave no token of shrinking from contact with the pretty child!

"Now," said my host, "will you touch the plant?"

Rising to do so, I approached it with one hand extended, and before it had come fairly in contact the nearest spray and leaves wilted visibly.

"The plant knows the child," said the doctor, "but you are a stranger." It was a puzzling experience, which seemed to endow the Mimosa with intelligence.

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History of the Wedding Ring

By William R. Florence

A LONG time ago the wedding ring was worn on the forefinger, and was thickly studded with precious stones. People who have seen the old pictures of the Madonna in Rome will remember that in one or two of them there is a glistening ring on the forefinger of her right hand, but with Christianity came the wearing of the wedding ring on the third finger rather than the first. The old story of there being a vein that runs from that finger to the heart is nonsense. Its use originated in this way: The priest first put it on the thumb, saying: "In the name of the Father"; on the forefinger, adding, "In the name of the Son"; on the second finger, repeating, "In the name of the Holy Ghost," and on the third finger, ending with "Amen," and there it stayed.

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Sewing the Lips of Cobras

A LARGE cobra de capello, says a writer in Chambers' Journal, was sent home several years ago to Sir Joseph Fayrer, who wanted a supply of venom for analysis. It bit the spoon repeatedly without yielding any, and on examination was found to have none to yield, not only its fangs, but the poisonous glands having been extirpated. A protective operation still more cruel is sometimes practiced by novices in the art of charming, and consists in securing the mouth with a stitch of silk passed through the lips in front. To perform this the poor beast's head is held tightly pressed to the ground by a short stick, on which the foot rests, while the other foot restrains the writhing body, leaving both hands at liberty for the needle. Eleven apparently healthy cobras were on one occasion received at the London Zoological Gardens. They refused to feed, and grew thin. When one died it was discovered that its mouth was sewed up with stitches so fine as to be invisible to any but the closest scrutiny. The rest of them did quite well when they were restored to their normal condition.

In connection with this subject I may mention that a rattlesnake was sent to me from up country when I was in Demerara, with the history that it had killed a coolie on one of the plantations. It had been badly injured about the spine, probably in capture, so that on reaching me it was not only dead, but decomposed, and I was not able to make any very complete dissection, but I found that its lips were tied together with stitches—obviously the effort of an unpracticed hand, since the work was very coarse. This had apparently been preceded by an unsuccessful attempt to extract the long, erectile, needle-like fangs, for one of these was twisted half round with its bony base, and had penetrated the lower lip when the jaws were forcibly closed. It is hardly possible that the duct was not occluded, but enough venom must have remained within the tube of the tiny, delicate syringe to inflict a fatal scratch.

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In an Underground Asiatic City

THE Russians have made a singular discovery in Central Asia. In Turkestan, on the right bank of the Amou Daria, is a chain of rocky hills near the Bokharan town of Karki, and a number of large caves, which, upon examination, were found to lead to an underground city, built apparently long before the Christian era. According to effigies, inscriptions, and designs upon the gold and silver money unearthed from among the ruins, the existence of the town dates back to some two centuries before the birth of Christ. The underground Bokharan city is about two versts long, and is composed of an enormous labyrinth of corridors, streets and squares, surrounded by houses and other buildings two or three stories high. The edifices contain all kinds of domestic utensils, pots, urns, vases, and so forth. In some of the streets falls of earth and rock have obstructed the passages, but generally the visitor can walk about freely without so much as lowering his head. The high degree of civilization attained by the inhabitants of the city is shown by the fact that they built in several stories, by the symmetry of the streets and squares, and by the beauty of the baked clay and metal utensils, and of the ornaments and coins which have been found. It is supposed that centuries ago this city, so concealed in the bowels of the earth, provided an entire population with a refuge from the incursions of nomadic savages and robbers.

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How to Live

By Gerald Massey

DID we but strive to make the best
Of troubles that befall us,
Instead of meeting cares half-way,
They would not so appall us.
Earth has a spell for loving hearts,
Why should we seek to break it?
Let's scatter flowers instead of thorns—
The world is what we make it.

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Facts About Books

NO BOOK has been so often printed as the Bible. No fewer than one thousand three hundred and twenty-six editions of the Bible were published in the sixteenth century. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it was translated and published in many languages by the Polyglot Press of the Propaganda Fide at Rome. Down to 1887 the British Bible Society printed no fewer than one hundred and twelve million Bibles, and the American, forty million. The former issues four million and the latter one million and a half copies yearly. The smallest book ever printed is the Thumb Bible, which is the size of a postage stamp. Another very small book is Hooph's "Dante," two and a half inches by one and a half inches. It is stated that from 1842 to 18[illegible] Mudie bought six million books for his lending library, sometimes taking as many as three thousand copies of a new work. Chapman and Hall have sold nearly a million copies of Pickwick Papers. The sale of Webster's Spelling Book has already passed fifty million. More than one million and a half copies of Uncle Tom's Cabin were sold down to 1887, and the public has demanded five hundred and twenty thousand copies of Longfellow's Poems.

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Peculiarities of Women

WOMEN pin from left to right, men from right to left. Women button from right to left, men from left to right. Women stir from left to right (their tea, for instance), men from right to left. Women seldom know the difference between a right and left shoe, and if a housemaid brings up a man's boots, she will, nine times out of ten, place them so that the points will diverge.

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The Largest Forest in the World

IT APPEARS that Siberia, from the plain of the Obi River on the west to the valley of the Indighirka on the east, embracing the great plains or river valleys of the Yenisei, Olenek, Lena and Yana rivers, is one great timber belt, averaging more than a thousand miles in breadth from north to south—being fully seventeen hundred miles wide in the Yenisei district—and having a length from east to west of not less than forty-six hundred versts, about three thousand miles. Unlike equatorial forests, the trees of the Siberian taigas are mainly conifers, comprising pines of several varieties, firs and larches. In the Yenisei, Lena and Olenek regions there are thousands of square miles where no human being has ever been. The long-stemmed conifers rise to a height of one hundred and fifty feet or more, and stand so closely together that walking among them is difficult. The dense, lofty tops exclude the pale, arctic sunshine, and the straight, pale trunks, all looking exactly alike, so bewilder the eye in the obscurity that all sense of direction is soon lost. Even the most experienced trappers of sable dare not venture into the dense taigas without taking the precaution of "blazing" the trees constantly with hatchets as they walk forward. If lost there, the hunter rarely finds his way out, but perishes miserably from starvation or cold. The natives avoid the taigas.

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Thoughts on Temper

Temper is nine-tenths of Christianity.—JEREMY TAYLOR.

He who has overcome one evil temper, has acquired moral force to overcome another.—HENRY WAYLAND.

The difficult part of a good temper consists in forbearance and accommodation to the ill-humors of others.—RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

He is happy whose circumstances suit his temper, but he is more happy who can suit his temper to any circumstances.—DAVID HUME.

There is no obstacle to advancement or happiness so great as an undisciplined temper—a temper subject to pique or uncertainty.—DAVID MOIR.

Told About Celebrities

MARK TWAIN'S PROTEST.—While Mark Twain was ill in London, a few months ago, a report that he had died was circulated. It spread to America and reached Charles Dudley Warner, in Hartford, Connecticut. Mr. Warner immediately cabled to London to find out whether it was really so. The cablegram in some way came directly into the humorist's hands, and he forthwith cabled the following reply: "Reports of my death greatly exaggerated."

SARAH BERNHARDT'S [illegible]. Sarah Bernhardt has had many curious [illegible]. She has horsewhipped a lady who insulted her; she has procured a princess for a daughter-in-law; she carries a silk-lined coffin about with her, and often sleeps in it, and for long she has had for companion a tame tigress. But her latest pet is the most extraordinary; it is an opossum, which she found as a baby in Australia at the foot of a tree, where it had dropped from its mother's pouch. She has reared it quite successfully, and what is more, has trained it to fetch and carry things at its mistress' order.

COURTESY OF AN ARCHBISHOP.—The late Archbishop Tait had a large and kindly tolerance for human stupidity. A bore had written him a series of letters in regard to some question of church discipline, to which for some time the Archbishop did not reply. Finally he turned them over to his secretary and said: "Tell the fellow he is an ass, but say so kindly."

ADELINA PATTI'S BRAVERY.—When quite a little girl Madame Adelina Patti once saved a companion's life. She was living in New York at the time, and when out on a country excursion with some young friends, one of the party, slipping on the edge of a river, fell into a deep pool. The future Queen of Song at once sprang in after her, succeeded in reaching the drowning girl and clung with her to a floating log. Buoyed up in this way, the two girls floated down stream, and were saved.

FOUNDER OF MONTE CARLO.—Monsieur Blanc, founder of the Casino at Monte Carlo, though immensely wealthy, was very close in small affairs. He never played but once. It was on a very hot day, and his wife demanded that he buy her a parasol. They went to a store, and she selected one that cost sixteen dollars, which, with a disgusted gesture, he paid. That afternoon, when the Casino opened, M. Blanc appeared and placed two dollars on the red at one of the *trente et quarante* tables. He won, pocketed his winnings and left the original stake on the table. For a second time he won and had got his sixteen dollars back. Not content he wagered again, but lost, then doubled his stake and won again, and then set about playing for the two louis he was behind. He played and lost, broke a thousand franc note, then wrote a check, and finally, when the last deal was called, M. Blanc seized his yellow cane and started for home. There he found his wife playing "patience" with a pack of cards, the offending parasol lying on the table. "Madame," said the old gentleman, "do you know what that thing has cost me?" "*Mais oui, mon ami.* It cost you sixteen dollars." "Madame," rejoined he, "you are mistaken, I have just paid the bill—eighteen thousand dollars. That is all."

THE DUKE OF NORFOLK, having given an excursion party permission to visit his fine park at Arundel, his steward had a number of notices, "Keep off the grass," printed and put up at different spots. On the day of the trip the Duke was seen busily engaged in removing all the boards he could reach. The steward, at a loss to explain this strange conduct, asked his grace the reason of it. "Many of the old ladies," replied the Duke, "will have corns, and, I am sure, would rather walk on the grass than on the footpaths." It is a pity the old ladies did not learn at the time how much they owed the Duke.

ENTERTAINING TENNYSON.—An old hotel-keeper of Scotland, at whose house Tennyson had stayed, was asked: "Do you ken who you had wi' you t'other night?" "Na," was the hotel-keeper's reply, "but he was a shentleman." "It was Tennyson, the poet!" "An' wha' may he be?" "Oh, he is a writer o' verses, such as ye see i' the papers!" "Noo, to think o' that! Jeest a pooblic writer, and I gied him ma best bedroom!"

A TWELVE HOUR SPEECH of Dr. Lecher in the Austrian Reichsrath beat all British records, speaking not merely like Lord Palmerston, from the dusk of one day to the dawn of the next, but for twelve mortal hours. He did not greet the rising sun, like Pitt or Gladstone, with a neat quotation from Virgil; perhaps it was foggy, perhaps he knew no Virgil. But he did very well, all things considered. They only gave him two pauses of ten minutes and one of five, and he only consumed three glasses of wine, two cups of black coffee and fifteen glasses of water. If that seems a lot to you, just put in your Saturday afternoon and evening at a twelve-hour speech and see. There was a little assistance. Toward the end his comrades sang "Long may he live," at intervals, and all through they cheered and banged their desk lids whenever he seemed to want breath. Also there was Herr Wolf, who did not understand the game at first, and spoke and desk-lidded simultaneously with Lecher for an hour. But Lecher did it, and played out the majority and all of the Presidents.

How Three Mysteries Were Solved

TOLD IN A TRIO OF STORIES

John Sampson's Conversion

THE BIBLE READER'S STORY

By H. D. Lowry

"BUT there!" said Sam'l, as he reached the end of his story. "There's a bra' many Christians, as they do call themselves, that do read the Bible in no better fashion than old John Sampson. . . . G'wan, Jess!"

He shook up the reins and awaited my question: "Who was old John Sampson?"

"Another of the many people that I knew before you came into these parts," was the answer. "Wheal Dream had not been stopped in those days, and John Sampson came from over to Tallywarn to work there, and took lodgings with mother."

"And he did not read his Bible wisely?"

Sam'l chuckled. "He didn' read it at all first going away," he answered. "Mother was a woman of some conscience; she used to wonder whether it wadn' laid upon her to turn him to doors and starve, rather than have such a man under a Christian roof. I believe he was sober enough and no great swearer. Indeed, so far as I can remember him, he was a man that rarely talked about anything. But he never went to chapel.

"He used to spend Sundays on the moors in good weather, and when it rained he would sit smoking in a little shed where the donkey-cart was kept. If he was by when mother prayed before sending us off to bed he would go outside and sit on the garden wall with his pipe in his mouth. I've known her pull down the window and pray almost in a shout, on the chance that some word in season might strike him like a javelin and bring him to a proper frame of mind.

"He stopped in Pentreath for some years, and 'twas always the same with him. Then one day he came into the kitchen with a very strange look upon his face. 'Beggin' your pardon, Mis' Gurney,' he said, 'but could 'ee give me the loan of a Bible?'

"I can see mother's face now, for I was growing a big boy by this time. 'A Bible?' she said. 'Thee's want a Bible? Praise be for that! I'll give 'ee a Bible.'

"Well, she gave him a Bible, and after that she watched him pretty closely. And, 'Ah!' she said one day, 'the influence of a Christian family is a thing that must tell.' For old John Sampson stuck to that Bible like a limpet to a rock, and was all the time reading it. Mother noticed that he began at the beginning and read straight through, genealogies and all, and that pleased her, for she was always thorough herself.

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"This went on for some little time. There was a bra' deal of talk about it in Pentreath, and, to begin with, very few would believe the story mother told. However, old Mis' Shewes dropped in one evening, all by chance as she made out, and sure enough John Sampson was sitting in the doorway reading away for dear life. So she went forth and told the news.

"Mother was pleased enough to have matters as they were for a time. However, after a bit, she thought 'twas a pity the old man shouldn' go further, having begun so well. So one Sunday morning, when he took up the Bible and was going out to sit on the little seat that stood against the front of the house, she spoke.

"'Wouldn' 'ee like to come to chapel, John?' she said.

He looked back with a smile. 'No,' he said, 'I'd rather stop here and read.'

"Very soon John Sampson went into town one Saturday by Jimmy Hayle's van, and brought back a fat, red book, which turned out to be a dictionary. After that he always had the two books by him at the same time. He would stop in the midst of his Bible reading and turn over the leaves of his dictionary like a man hunting for something. But he never seemed to find it—whatever it might be. And presently he finished the last chapter of Revelation, and shut up the book with the air of a man come to the end of a long job, and not too well pleased with what he'd done. He laid it down upon the table.

"'I suppose you haven' got another Bible in the house? I should like to get the loan of it, if you have.'

'Why, man,' said mother, 'isn't your own Bible, that I gave 'ee, good enough for 'ee? What d'ifference is there between one Bible and another?'

"'If you've got another,' he said, 'I should like to get the loan of it.'

"Well, mother was only too glad to have the old man read the Bible at all. She humored him and fetched out the great, big family Bible. And he began again at Genesis and went right on to Revelation. He still kept the dictionary by him as he read, and would still turn away from his reading about once in ten minutes to hunt in that dictionary for something he never seemed to find. More than once mother hinted about his going to chapel, but his answer was always the same. 'No,' he would say, 'I'd rather stop at home and read the Bible.'

"And when he came to the end of the family Bible a strange story began to be told about him. For he went forth and borrowed another Bible and commenced again at Genesis. At the end of a year he came to Revelation again, and then he went and borrowed another Bible. 'Twould be a bold thing to say a man was touched in the head because he was all the time reading the Scriptures. But what puzzled everybody was that John Sampson should never be willing to read the same copy more than once.

"At last, after much talk upon the subject, every one was convinced that he really was a little bit dotty, for a man came into Pentreath selling cheap Bibles, and John bought three copies, varying in size like three children o' one family. He put two in his drawer, and went through the other in the usual way.

"Now, can 'ee guess what he read the Bible for? No need to answer, for you wouldn' be right if you guessed till doomsday. Nor did any one in Pentreath ever dream of what had worked the change until John Sampson died suddenly, when he was about half way through the seventh of his Bibles. Of course, they searched his bureau, and so on; and at last they found an old pocketbook. In it was a piece cut out of the Argus: 'Any one who discovers a printer's mistake in a copy of the Bible is entitled to receive a reward of one guinea.' And the secret was out."

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The Mysterious Looking-Glass

A COMEDY OF ERRORS IN JAPAN

By George Japy

IN THE little Japanese village of Yowcuski, a looking glass was an unheard of thing, and girls did not even know what they looked like, except on hearing the description their lovers gave of their beauty.

Now it happened that a young Japanese, whose daily work was to pull along those light carriages such as were seen at the last Paris exhibition, picked up one day in the street a small pocket hand-mirror, probably dropped by some English lady tourist.

It was, of course, the first time in his life that Kiki-Tsum had ever gazed on such a thing. He looked carefully at it, and to his intense astonishment saw the image of a brown face, with dark intelligent eyes, and a look of awestruck wonderment.

Kiki-Tsum dropped on his knees, and gazing earnestly at the object he held in his hand, he whispered, "It is my sainted father. How could his portrait have come here? Is it perhaps a warning of some kind?"

He carefully closed the precious treasure up in his handkerchief and put it in the large pocket of his loose blouse. When he went home that night he hid it away carefully in a vase which was scarcely ever touched, as he did not know of any safer place in which to deposit it. He said nothing of the adventure to his young wife, for, as he said to himself, "Women are curious, and then, too, sometimes they are given to talking."

For some days Kiki-Tsum was in a great state of excitement. He was thinking of the portrait all the time, and at intervals he would leave his work and suddenly appear at home to take a look at his treasure.

Now, in Japan, as in other countries, mysterious actions and irregular proceedings of all kinds have to be explained to a wife. Lili Tsee did not understand why her husband kept appearing at all hours of the day. Certainly he kissed her every time he came in like this. At first she was satisfied at his explanation when he told her that he only ran in for a minute to see her pretty face. She thought it was really quite natural on his part, but when day after day he appeared, and always with the same solemn expression, she began to wonder in her heart of hearts. And so Lili-Tsee fell to watching, and she noticed that he never went away until he had been alone in the little room at the back of the house. She hunted day after day to see if she could find some trace of anything in that little room which was at all unusual, but she never found anything.

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One day, however, she happened to come in suddenly and saw her husband replacing the long, blue vase. He made some excuse about its not looking very steady, and appeared to be just setting it aright, and Lili Tsee pretended there was nothing out of the common in his putting the vase straight. The moment he had gone out of the house, though, she was up on a stool like lightning, and in a moment she had fished the looking glass out of the vase. She took it carefully in her hand, wondering whatever it could be, but when she looked in it the terrible truth was clear. What was it she saw?

Why, the portrait of a woman, and she had believed that Kiki-Tsum was so good.

Her grief was at first too deep for any words. She just sat down on the floor with the terrible portrait in her lap, and rocked herself backward and forward. Suddenly a fit of anger seized her, and she gazed at the glass again. The same face looked at her, but she wondered how her husband could admire such a face, so wicked did the dark eyes look: there was an expression in them that she certainly had not seen at first.

She had no heart, however, for anything, and did not even make any attempt to prepare a meal for her husband. She just went on sitting there on the floor, nursing the portrait, and at the same time her wrath. When later Kiki-Tsum arrived, he was surprised to find nothing ready for their evening meal, and no wife awaiting him.

"So this is the love you professed for me! This is the way in which you treat me, before we have even been married a year!" he heard a voice say.

"What do you mean, Lili-Tsee?"

"What do I mean? What do you mean? I should think. The idea of your keeping portraits in my rose-leaf vase. Here, take it and treasure it, for I do not want it—the wicked, wicked woman!" and here poor Lili Tsee burst out crying.

"I cannot understand," said her bewildered husband.

"Oh, you can't?" she said, laughing hysterically. "I can, though, well enough. You like that hideous, villainous-looking woman better than your own true wife."

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"Lili-Tsee, what do you mean?" asked her husband, getting exasperated in his turn. "That portrait is the living image of my poor, dead father. I found it in the street and put it in your vase for safety."

Lili-Tsee's eyes flashed with indignation at this. "How dare you attempt to prevaricate! He wants to tell me I do not know a woman's face from a man's!"

Kiki-Tsum was wild with indignation, and a quarrel began. The loud, angry words attracted the notice of a bonze (Japanese priest) who was passing.

"My children," he said, putting his head in at the door, "why this unseemly anger? why this dispute?"

"Father," said Kiki-Tsum, "my wife is mad."

"All women are so, my son, more or less," interrupted the holy bonze. "You were wrong to expect perfection. It is no use getting angry; all wives are trials."

"My husband has the portrait of a woman hidden in my rose leaf vase."

"I swear that I have no portrait but that of my poor, dead father," explained the aggrieved husband.

"My children, my children," said the holy bonze majestically, "show me the portraits."

The bonze took the glass and looked at it earnestly. He then bowed low before it, and in an altered tone said: "My children, settle your quarrel and live peaceably together. You are both in the wrong. This portrait is of a saintly and venerable bonze. I know not how you could mistake so holy a face. I must take it and place it among the precious relics of our church."

So saying the bonze lifted his hands to bless the husband and wife, and then went slowly away, carrying with him the mysterious little glass which had wrought such mischief.—The Strand Magazine.

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Convicted by Her Own Words

AN ASSISTED MARRIAGE PROPOSAL

"BAH, sir! I'm utterly ashamed of you! The last of the Dracies, and a miserable failure!"

Uncle Peter was a privileged individual, and his nephew merely smiled. It was something of a novelty to hear himself described as a failure. Uncle Peter was a bachelor. At the present moment he was doing his level best to bring about the union of his favorite nephew and his ward, Mabel Dewar.

This should not have proved a very difficult task, as Uncle Peter was convinced that the couple were greatly in love.

Harry, however, could not bring himself to believe that the feeling was mutual—failed utterly to realize his good fortune. In Mabel's presence he was truly a "failure."

"To think of it!" groaned Uncle Peter. "You're as helpless as a child. You appear to regard Mabel with the same feelings as a wretched, miserable little rabbit eyes a boa constrictor. She can't eat you, man—where's your pluck? Bah!"

A few minutes later the door opened and the innocent cause of all the trouble tripped into the room in search of a book.

Mabel had some difficulty in finding the particular novel she required. As a matter of fact, Uncle Peter was sitting on it.

"Have you seen it, Uncle?" she asked.

"Seen what, child?"

"He Waited to Win!"

"Yes," responded Uncle Peter, with a glance in Harry's direction, "I've noticed it! I've been sitting on him—I mean it! Here you are, child. I've skimmed through part of the book, but my eyes are not what they were, and I'll ask you to read me a chapter to-morrow. From what I can make out at present the hero's a young idiot—he does a lot more waiting than wooing!"

Mabel departed with the book, and a moment later Harry, finding matters had grown unpleasantly warm in his present quarters, decided on a stroll in the garden.

"I'll do it!" muttered Uncle Peter as the door closed. "Questionable it may be, but hang me if I'm going to be thwarted by a couple who don't know their own minds!"

"Now, my child, I'm ready. Fire away!"

Uncle Peter leaned back in his comfortable armchair, spread his huge red handkerchief over his face to keep off the flies, and prepared to listen.

"Where shall I begin?" asked Mabel, picking up the novel, He Waited to Win.

"I've marked the place where I left off yesterday," returned Uncle Peter, rather drowsily, Mabel thought. "On page 95, I believe."

Having found the page, Mabel proceeded to read in the clear, distinct tones Uncle Peter had grown familiar with.

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She was a splendid reader, and it was really disgraceful of Uncle Peter to seize the opportunity to secure "forty winks"—as he was apparently doing.

Before Mabel had read a page and a half Uncle Peter's head was nodding, and his ward had noticed it, too.

What she did not notice, however, was a low, clicking sound as she turned over the leaf and proceeded to read page 97.

This was followed by a faint, continuous whir-r-r—so faint, indeed, that Mabel was not aware of it until she came to the end of the first paragraph.

Then, as Mabel glanced up from her book to ascertain the cause of this mysterious sound, a terrific snore shook the red handkerchief—and the gas globes as well.

With a smile at Uncle Peter's astounding accomplishments in the art of snoring, Mabel laid aside the book, and stole from the room.

Then a strange thing happened. As the door closed behind his ward, the handkerchief dropped to the floor, revealing the mirth-convulsed features of Uncle Peter.

He was wide awake, very!

"Ho! ho! ho!" he chuckled, as the tears chased each other down his fat cheeks. "Ho! ho! ho! If she knew! There's nothing can beat the young 'uns but the old 'uns!"

For the next few minutes he could do nothing but sit and chuckle. His rotund body swayed and bobbed about like a captive balloon, and in a way that spoke volumes for the substantial nature of his comfortable chair.

Then, pulling himself together, he went down on his knees, dragged a compact little arrangement from under the chair, and locked it up in the big oak secretary.

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"Yes, my boy, the phonograph is a wonderful invention. This particular machine, which only arrived yesterday, is fitted with all the latest improvements, and appears to possess a certain amount of intelligence."

"Rubbish!" said Harry.

"Nothing of the kind," chuckled Uncle Peter. "A few years ago it was the lady's maid who wormed her way into family affairs; now it is the phonograph. Even this one has its little secret. Would you like to hear it?"

"Don't care," replied Harry unconcernedly. "Reed's last speech, I suppose, or the latest music hall song?"

"Something a trifle more interesting, my boy. Listen."

Harry Dracie could scarcely believe his ears as the following—in the unmistakable tones of Mabel—wormed its way from the inner recesses of the phonograph.

"'You have guessed my secret—I love him. What then? Would you have me confess the truth to him, and take him willy-nilly? Turn wooer and plead at his feet? or hunter, and stalk him? No, no! A woman can but wait."

Then followed a roar like a peal of distant thunder, which Uncle Peter alone understood. Harry was speechless for a moment.

"Can it be possible?" he gasped. "Mabel?'

"Just so," remarked Uncle Peter. "It is but fair to add, however, that the speech was never intended to reach your ears. Mabel has not even a suspicion that I have it recorded. Now, what is it to be? Shall woman continue to wait'

For reply Harry grabbed his cap and was rushing into the garden, when Uncle Peter promptly pulled him up.

"One moment, my boy. Steady yourself, and, remember, not a word of this," pointing to the phonograph—"not one word, now or hereafter, as you value your happiness.'

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Late in the afternoon Harry cornered his Uncle on the subject of the "confession."

"What confession?"

"The one recorded in the phonograph, of course. How on earth did you obtain it?"

"My dear boy," chuckled the old man, "you are jumping at conclusions. There was really no confession at all. If you care to hear it again you will find no reference either to Mabel or yourself."

"Then how? Why? What——?"

"Steady, my boy, and I'll explain. It appears as if you would never be happy without a confession of some sort, so I'll make one. I fooled you both, badly."

"Then Mabel never told you——"

"Precisely!" chuckled Uncle Peter. "You've hit it first time. If you remember, Mabel was reading aloud to me yesterday from the novel, He Waited to Win. Of course, I chose the chapter—one I had read before. Now, take the book, turn to page 97, and read the first paragraph."

Harry did so, and understood.

"Don't you think——" he began.

"Never you mind what I think!" interrupted Uncle Peter. "All you have to do is to make Mabel happy. If you care to tell her that, after all, you obtained the necessary courage to pop the question from page 97, of course, you can do so!"

The Bite of a Cobra

AN ADVENTURE IN A BURMESE BUNGALOW

THEY were talking of snake bites, and conversation turned upon cobras, whose bite is almost certain death. One of the crowd wondered what sensations a person must experience after the bite. A quiet, gray-haired man, named Bings, said he could tell him, as he had been bitten and knew what it was. Without waiting for questions he continued:

"One hot, sweltering night I was lying in a state, half sleep and half heat-stupor, in a Burmese bungalow, when I suddenly became aware that a dark, flat object, in which gleamed two spots of malignant light, was moving up along my right leg. I could just see it over my limb, and the blood in my veins simply froze with horror as I realized that it must either be a cobra or a karasite. The body of the serpent was evidently in the bed, and the head elevated just enough to watch my face. A queer, constrictive sort of feeling shot up and down my scalp, and the hair stood out straight, I am sure.

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"There are no words in which I can convey the slightest idea of the full measure of loathsome horror which took possession of me, and turned me sick with the intensity of its dreadfulness, when I recognized that I was shut in with, and completely at the mercy of, one of these death-dealing fiends. I dared not move a muscle—to call out meant death, for were he roused, either by fear or anger, he would deal out death to the nearest living object with the rapidity of lightning. My hand was lying down beside my thigh, and already I could feel his cold, slimy body moving over it. If my blood was frozen before, this chilled the very marrow in my bones. I could see little by the light of the flickering lamp, which hung in the veranda opposite my room door, beyond that flat, swaying head, set like a fiend's toy with those gleaming eyes.

"I felt that I could not stand it much longer. I should become a raving maniac if something did not happen soon. I almost wished that he would strike and end the dreadful suspense. I knew that he would not voluntarily leave the bed all night, and would most probably coil himself up on my chest and remain there. One year, two years, ten years, I lay thus, with the brute drawing his interminable length over my hand—yes, ten years! for next day I was ten years older, and my hair, black when I went to bed, was as gray as it is now.

"Then I must have moved my hand, for the fiend struck—without warning and with such great rapidity that I saw nothing, only felt the sharp, lancelike thrust in my thigh. With a rush, my blood, which had been standing still in my veins, I think, went tearing through my body again, and before my horrified cry had ceased to ring through the bungalow, I was standing on the floor. As I sprang from the bed, when he struck, I felt his body go hurtling over my head up against the pillow, as I threw up the arm he had been lying on.

"Brown—'Bangle Brown,' as he was called then, because he used to wear a silver bangle on his left wrist that some girl had given him—was calling from the next room, 'Who is there? who is there?' and the whole bungalow was soon in a turmoil. Cold drops of perspiration rolled down my forehead, and my face was like the face of a dead man, Brown said, when I went into his room, where he had a light.

"'Have you seen a ghost?' he asked.

"'Worse than that,' I replied. 'I have been bitten by a cobra.'

"'Nonsense, man,' he ejaculated, 'you have been dreaming,' but his face was ashy pale now, too.

"'Here are the marks of his fangs,' I said, as I bared my thigh; and there, sure enough, were two tiny punctures, and a drop of blood oozing from one.

"There could be no mistake about it now—his light had swept away the last vestige of hope. All that remained to do was to make a futile effort to stay the deadly poison. Already I could feel a peculiar twitching sensation where the lines run from the nose down past the corners of the mouth; and there was a dull, tugging sort of pain in my heart, a feeling as though the blood was being forced through it at increased pressure. My head was dizzy and my eyes hot and blurred, and it was with the greatest difficulty that I could keep my mind from wandering. I could hardly manage to articulate a word, and when I did manage to speak I would say what I did not mean—using the wrong word. It was evident that the poison was beginning to paralyze my brain; and already I felt an almost unconquerable desire to lie down and go to sleep.

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"By this time Brown and the others were thoroughly awake to the seriousness of the case, and had started to do all in their power to save me. Brown was a sort of amateur surgeon, and always carried a small apothecary establishment with him. I saw him whip out a lancet and look at me in a questioning way. I nodded, and in an instant he had the piece surrounding the bite out and his lips applied to the gaping wound.

"Giving me a dose of permanganate of potassium, Brown placed me in the hands of two Sepoy orderlies, with strict orders to keep me going, swearing that he would shoot the first man that let me stop—for to rest for an instant meant certain death.

"'Now, my lads, let's kill the viper,' he said, when he had done all he could to save me; 'we shall find him coiled up in the bed waiting for another victim.'

"At these words a sudden fury took possession of me, and I said: 'Let me be in at the death—I will kill him before I die myself.'

"Grabbing the lamp and a stout stick, I rushed into my room, followed rather cautiously by the others. I flashed the light on the bed, holding the stick poised aloft for a quick, strong blow, but there was no object there to vent my fury upon. Then I remembered that I had thrown him up over my head when I jumped from the bed. Telling Brown to throw the pillow over with a quick movement, I held the lamp in my left hand and stood ready to give his cobraship his quietus with a powerful blow.

"Quick as a flash the pillow was jerked to the other end of the bed, and there was a rush of a dark brown body, with the devilish eyes gleaming like two baleful sparks. The stick dropped from my nerveless grasp, and I tumbled to the floor. It was only a rat!

"The perspiration broke out all over my body and I was as limp as a rag. The nerves, strung up to the tension that they had been, suddenly gave way, and I could only sob out hysterically:

"'Let him go—don't kill him, please!'

"I could hear Brown's deep-drawn, 'Thank God,' and in the general sense of relief the rat was allowed to escape. That is how it feels to be bitten by a cobra," concluded Bings, "as near as I can describe it."

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The First Dinner at Home

A YOUNG WIFE PLANS A SURPRISE

By Foster Coates

EVERY woman can get a husband if she chooses, but not every woman can keep a husband's love, once it is obtained. Cupid is a whimsical little chap, who delights in upsetting all regulation plans. I know one woman who has tried a novel plan with marked success. She is the wife of one of the great editors of New York, a bright, dashing little woman, who told me in confidence a while ago, and with pleasurable satisfaction, too, that she was always sure of her husband. She began right. Just after she was married her husband took her to a big and fashionable hotel, and shut her up in two rooms—almost made a prisoner of her, in fact—because he was compelled by the nature of his editorial duties to toil all day and often far into the night, and could not give her much of his society. She saw but little of him, and then he was fretful, as all overworked men are, and the poor thing, used to the society of mother and sisters, began to grow uneasy, and the roses faded from her cheeks. To be sure, she was caressed and petted now and then, but her life was not the pleasant dream she had hoped it would be.

One night, when her husband came home, this bright little wife told him that she was unhappy. Generous, like all men, the busy man thought to appease her by telling her that he would buy her some pretty jewel. He thought the gift would give her something to think about, and he asked if five hundred dollars would buy what she wanted.

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At this moment a bright idea stole into the girl-bride's head. It was to get a home of her own, and with five hundred dollars she could furnish, in a plain way, a small apartment, and so surprise her husband. She was tired of hotel life, tired of doing nothing, and she longed, as all women long, for a place, no matter how humble, to call home. She took the five hundred dollars and began at once to get such a place. The next day she hired a small apartment, paid one month's rent, and with the remainder of the money she furnished it as best she could. Of course, it was not elaborate, but it was an attractive little nest, clean and tidy, with pretty, but cheap, pictures on the walls, an easy-chair, a lounge, a few bits of bric-à-brac, and other things, and at the end of two weeks all was ready—a home fit for a king, for love was enthroned there. Her husband had no idea of what she was doing, he only knew that she seemed happier and more contented than usual.

When all was in readiness, the wife, one morning, said that they were invited to dine that night at the house of a very dear friend, a couple who did not have a very spacious home, but they were hospitable people, and the invitation should be accepted. The husband demurred at first. It was such a bore, and his business was so pressing at the office. But at last he promised to call at the house, the location of which his wife gave him, at six o'clock, and away he went to his office.

Then the little wife went to work. How she toiled that day in her new home! It was to be such a great surprise! She could not wait for six o'clock, and she hardly dared to trust herself to cook dinner. She had staked everything on her venture. Failure would break her heart. As the hours flew by she gathered courage. She went to market, bought food for a good dinner, and as she turned to go home she found seventy cents in her purse, all that was remaining of the five hundred dollars. What would she do with it? Could not she spend it for something to make her table attractive? Why not flowers? She remembered how her husband had romped with her in the country on summer days, when they were lovers only; how he sniffed the delicious odor of the roses and lilacs. So she went to a florist's shop and purchased a great bunch of hardy flowers, that scented her little dining-room and made it seem more homelike. Then she spent the afternoon in the kitchen, making a delicious soup, roasting a tender chicken, dressing a salad and baking steaming biscuit, just as her mother did in the old days. How lovely it all was! What a joyous time, so sunny in contrast to the dullness of the great barn-like hotel where they had been living.

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And thus the hours went by, and six o'clock came and brought with it a hungry, tired man, who looked forward only to a poor dinner and compulsory talk. He did not have to ring the door-bell, nor ask for Mrs. Somebody who did not exist. No, indeed! A pair of sharp eyes saw him swinging slowly down the street, and nimble fingers opened the door, and a loving kiss brought him to his senses. Then the couple went upstairs, and once inside the room the little wife could stand it no longer. Amid her laughter and tears she confessed what she had done, and the big fellow laughed and cried a bit, too, and felt first annoyed for not being consulted, and then proud of the woman who dared, and knew how, to conquer. And after a while he found his way into the little dining-room. The soup was steaming hot and refreshing, and he manfully gave his wife credit for her ability to cook. The perfume of the flowers was delicious, the biscuit "better even than mother could bake," the chicken was basted to a turn, the salad all a salad should be, and the pudding light and fluffy.

And so it came that the dinner was prolonged far into the evening. There was no work at the office that night, the big man was conquered, and the next day the rooms at the hotel were given up, and real home life begun. The little wife had something to do then, and her home, unpretentious as it was, was a model. For a year there was no change in it, until a whole house was taken and furnished luxuriously. To-day there is no happier home in New York. Three servants now assist the mistress in her duties, but every afternoon the wife spends an hour in the kitchen supervising all the details of the dinner, and every day, winter or summer, flowers on the table gladden the feast. But no day in this woman's whole life was so happy as the one on which she and her husband had their first home meal together.

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Dressing as a Fine Art

By Mrs. M. P. Handy

ALTHOUGH most women bitterly resent reflections on their taste in dress, the fact remains that but few really have the least knowledge of dress as a fine art, and few know how to use it to heighten their beauties and soften their defects. Many a woman gets the reputation of beauty who is merely stylish, and that style she may owe entirely to her dressmaker. A woman positively plain in one toilet may be actually pretty in another, and it is well to study your possibilities, and to make the best of them.

There are some pretty women, very few, who can wear anything—that is to say, they are so pretty that nothing can spoil them, and it is in endeavoring to copy them that plainer women make great mistakes. Nor can any fixed rules be laid down as to what one is to wear; even the complexion and the color of the eyes and hair are not an infallible guide, since what suits one blonde or brunette may by no means suit another of apparently the same type. When a customer goes to the great dressmaker of Paris he makes a study of her figure, face and general bearing, and selects her costume accordingly. One piece of material after another is brought out and thrown over the shoulders of the candidate, while he looks on until the right thing is reached. The material selected, the prospective wearer poses before him, that he may decide upon the style of drapery best suited to her. It is this careful adaptation of the dress to the wearer that is the great secret of his success; the woman whose dresses he makes to order is certain of looking her best.

But while only a few who sup life from a golden spoon can have this great artist to choose their dresses for them, any woman can make a study of her own type and dress up to it. She can try the material of a dress against her face before she buys it, and thus avoid putting on a gown which will extinguish whatever beauty she may possess. The dictum, credited to a great artist, that it is always safe to match your hair for the day, and your eyes for the night, has recently been going the rounds of the press. Even this plausible theory, however, does not hold good with women of neutral coloring. For example, during the recent rage for gray a lady appeared at a matinée faultlessly dressed in one of the lighter shades of the prevailing hue. Her gown was tailor-made and fitted to perfection; her bonnet, evidently from an artist, matched the suit; her gray gloves, even the pretty parasol, were all in keeping. But, alas, the wearer was a sallow blonde past her first youth, with hair of the peculiar light shade which the French call *gris cendre*, and the effect was to make her look ghastly. In this case a contrast was needed.

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Not long since at a fashionable dinner-party two of the guests might have exchanged toilets to their mutual advantage. One, a flaxen-haired blonde, wore a costume of pale beige satin; the other, with the clear pink skin which is rarely seen except in English women, had on a surah of exactly the same blush-rose hue, the one color, perhaps, which she ought never to have worn. We all know people who look never so well as when in mourning, simply because they wear the colors they like without any idea of the becoming, and the restriction to black prevents the indulgence of this idiosyncrasy. But in black, too, there is a difference, and while black velvet and black tulle are almost universally becoming, the dull, dead black of crape and bombazine can be carried off successfully by only clear, healthy skins.

It is the same thing with white. Dead white is becoming to very few, while cream white is suited to the majority of faces. Blue white is trying to all but clear skins, yet nothing filters a muddy complexion like the soft fleeciness of tulle, be it snow white or cream. The recent revival of tulle as a fabric for ball dresses is said to be due to Worth's effort to find something which would be becoming to a young heiress with an apparently hopeless complexion. One fabric after another, shade after shade, color after color, was tried, and for the first time in his life the autocrat of robes was almost ready to confess himself beaten, when suddenly he caught up a web of creamy tulle and enwrapped her in it. "That is the dress," he said at once.

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The increase in the number of handsome women during the last decade is due among other more remote causes to the much ridiculed æsthetes who taught the beauty of subdued colors, and helped to banish the crass hues of the dresses of women of a former generation. Their antique draperies and classic folds did much to oust the narrow flounces and puffed panniers, which made all short women look like flattened Gibraltars. The soft fabrics of the present day, and the straight, flowing lines in which they are draped, bring out all the grace of a good figure; while the short, much-looped skirts betrayed every flaw in form and carriage. The skillful dressmaker of to-day prides herself on making no two costumes exactly alike. "Why should I?" she asks; "none of my customers are duplicates," and thus she gives to a costume its most desirable feature—individuality—and makes it part of the wearer. Those who cannot pay her for her taste must do for themselves what she does for those who can. With a good eye for color, and the artistic sense which the American woman finds it so easy to acquire, this is not difficult.

The fit of a dress is its first requisite. The material is a minor consideration compared with this. A New York leader of fashion had a summer traveling suit of Russian crash, and the watering-place correspondents fairly raved over it. It is always best to economize on something else, and have your handsomest dresses made by a good hand. Still, if you cannot afford this, there is no reason why you should not fit yourself with the aid of a good pattern. You can easily have one cut to measure in any large town, but be sure to have it (the pattern) cut a little loose; there are plenty of cheap dressmakers who, with such a pattern, will give you a really good fit. Stout women make a grave mistake when they have their clothes made too tight.

Perpendicular stripes have a tendency to increase the seeming height of the wearer; horizontal stripes to lessen it; indeed, a knowledge of perspective will be found of the greatest value in dress as in most other arts. Thus a shoulder which is too low may be brought to the correct line by a cleverly-placed puff or epaulette, and one that is too high, by a sleeve gathered into an arm-scye cut a little long on the shoulder, or a trimming so arranged as to carry the eye away from the upper part of the arm.

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In fact, the true art in dress is to make the most of all one's good points, and to lessen as much as possible the bad ones. If a wise woman has a coarse, grainy skin she will expose it as little as possible; will wear her dress up to her chin, and her sleeves to the wrists, and when full dress requires something lighter, will cover neck and arms with a soft veil of lace or tulle. And, as only against a pearly skin does pure white lace shade prettily, she will choose creamy lace for the purpose. A very dark woman, however, may make her dark skin "point." Then pure white will be one of her best selections, in any light, airy fabric. There is a great deal in knowing how to use touches of color judiciously, especially on a dark costume. A bow of bright ribbon at the throat or in the hair, a gem placed where it catches the eye—these things have as much effect in a woman's dress as in a picture.

In the Children's World

ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE YOUNG FOLKS

Just Makin' B'lieve

By Annie Hamilton Donnell

I'VE maked b'lieve I was mamma
And been to the bargain store.
But the bargain (the baby) wiggled so
That I couldn't play that any more.
I've maked b'lieve I was C'lumbus,
And discovered the world all over,
The rug was the 'Lantic Ocean,
And I sailed on the nursery sofa.

I've maked b'lieve I was an Indian,
And scalped Polyphemia twice,
And I played be a big polar bear,
With the looking-glass for ice.
I've maked b'lieve I was the doctor,
With pearl tapioca pills,
But I was 'bliged to give up practice,
'Cause I couldn't c'lect my bills.

Two times I've b'lieved to be a circus,
And two times the coal man, too.
And once I was Robinson Crusoe,
And once I was Little Boy Blue.
O, I've maked b'lieve and I've maked b'lieve,
Till there's nothing else to be!
And now—I'm so hungry, mamma—
Let's make b'lieve I was me.—

Youth's Companion.

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The Happiest Day in Her Life

By Jennie Porter Arnold

ON A KEEN, cold evening in December two shabbily-dressed children were standing before a brightly-illuminated window filled with holiday goods. Their thinly-clad forms and broken shoes were poor protection against the piercing cold, but neither seemed to heed their bodily discomfort in the pleasure of looking at the beautiful things.

"Oh! oh! do see, Dickie! Ain't it booful?" the little girl exclaimed, dancing and clasping her cold hands in delight.

"What is?" the boy asked.

"The dollie in 'e pink dress. It's jest too booful for anything!"

"Oh, pshaw! Bessie, I could find a dozen prettier things than that in the window," was Dick's answer, with masculine contempt for such foolish things as dolls.

"Oh, but I fink it's boofuller than all 'e rest; it's a dollie, and I never had a real dollie, Dick," she said, with a pathetic droop of the sweet little mouth as she raised her blue eyes to his.

With the wisdom of his four additional years and his superior sex, Dick thought the doll the least desirable of all the goods in the window; but Bessie had been his special charge since the time, three years before, when his dying mother had kissed him a last "good-by," and made him promise to always love and care for his baby sister, and his tone changed to one of interest when he saw how earnest was Bessie's admiration.

"But, Bessie," he said more gently, "that doll costs heaps of money, mor'n I get in a month selling papers; you couldn't have that one even if I could buy one at all."

"Oh, I know; I didn't fink I could have anyfing so booful as that, but if I could have only jest a leetle, teeny one, so it was a real dollie; the rag Norah ties up for a dollie don't look like a real one," and the little girl drew a long sigh of desire and regret as her eyes roamed from the fancifully-dressed doll in pink silk to the numbers of smaller ones around it.

Her little form was shivering under her thin clothing, but she never thought of wishing for warmer garments; all her desires centred in that one object—a dollie.

"But we mustn't stand here, Bessie; we'll freeze if we do," Dick said, standing first on one foot and then on the other.

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Bessie gave one long, eager look at the doll, and turned reluctantly away. That night, as she knelt beside her miserable little bed, Dick heard her say softly, after her usual "Now I lay me," "Dear Dod, pease send me a little dollie for a Kismus pesent. 'Ou know I never had a real dollie, and I wants one so bad. Amen."

"And she shall have one, if I have to go without eating to get it," Dick said sturdily.

But that was easier said than done—for the few pennies Dick was able to earn by selling papers, running errands, etc., were claimed as part-payment for his board by the people who gave him a home—miserably poor though it was.

Four years before, his parents had come to this country from England, and his father being a skilled mechanic, they had lived in comfort until the sudden death of the husband left the young wife among strangers with her two little ones—a boy of four years and a little girl of three months. She was entirely alone except the faithful servant-girl, Norah Delaney, who had lived with them since their first arrival in New York. Three months later Mrs. Miller died, also, leaving the few hundred dollars she possessed to Norah on her promising to always care for the children.

Norah was very fond of them and intended to faithfully keep her promise, but she soon after married a gay, rollicking young Irishman, who loved his pipe and mug quite as well as he loved Norah, and before a year had passed the money was all spent, and Mike felt the children a burden.

The results of evil associations soon showed themselves in Norah, who at last began to drink too, and the little ones, who had been so tenderly cared for, felt frequently Mike's savage blows, and shrank from his harsh threats and curses.

For a year Dick had been sent out to earn all he could, and every cent was taken from him as soon as he returned to his miserable home. How he was to find the money necessary to buy the doll for Bessie was a subject of earnest thought to him.

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The next morning, finding Norah in one of her more amiable moods, he coaxed from her a promise that all he could earn over twenty cents a day should be his own to buy Bessie a Christmas present. Early and late he sought every means in his power of earning a penny, but at the end of a week he had but fifteen cents toward the fifty he had set as the amount he must raise for the doll, and there remained but two days more to Christmas. Poor Dick began to fear it must be a very small doll indeed, if he succeeded in buying any at all.

That night there was a fall of snow, and Dick was up with the first ray of light. If he could but clear off one or two walks he might hope to get the remaining sum necessary to complete his purchase. Mike was sleeping off the effects of his drinking the night before, and Norah consented to Dick's using the snow-shovel on condition that he returned it before Mike awakened, otherwise he would have to give up all he had earned with it. As Mike seldom rose before ten o'clock Dick had no fears on that point, and hastened away with a light heart. But there seemed a man or boy to every square foot of sidewalk in the city, and for an hour he tried in vain to find a job. His heart had grown heavy with disappointment when, at the corner of a quiet street, he found at last a walk uncleared.

"Miss Margery Fleming, Dressmaker," was on a small tin sign at the side of the door, which just at that moment opened and a sharp-eyed woman of about fifty years of age looked out.

"Please, ma'am, can I clean your walk?" Dick asked, politely touching his ragged cap.

"Well," she said slowly, after looking him over from head to foot, "if you'll clean it off nicely I'll give you fifteen cents, but if you play any of your boy tricks on me I won't pay you a cent; so now remember!"

"Yes, ma'am, I'll be sure and do it nice," Dick said, hurrying away to begin the job.

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Miss Margery went bustling around about her morning's work, thinking no more about Dick, until an hour later he came to the door and asked for a broom to sweep off the walk.

One of the girls gave it to him, and ten minutes after he stood before Miss Margery, hat in hand.

"It's all done, ma'am," he said.

"Well, we'll see," Miss Margery answered, going to the door, "I don't pay a boy until I know how his work is done."

"Well, I do declare!" she exclaimed as she passed to the corner of the house where she could see over her entire walk. It was as clean as in summer.

"Here's thirty cents," she said, handing that amount to Dick. "You've done it so well I'll pay you double."

"Oh, thank you, ma'am!" Dick exclaimed in astonishment and delight. "You are so very kind! Now I shall have enough to buy the doll for Bessie."

"And is that what you are working for?" Miss Margery asked, looking at his ragged jacket and old patched shoes. "I should think you'd want to get you some clothes before you bought a doll."

"But Bessie is such a little girl, she never had a doll and she wants one so bad," and Dick's voice shook a little as he went on. "Why, ma'am, she wanted it so bad I heard her praying the other night that the Lord would send her one for a Christmas present."

"Well, I never!" Miss Margery said, trying to wink away the tears from her own eyes. "Come in here and get some breakfast; you look as if you hadn't had a good square meal for a month.

"Now tell me all about it," she said, after she had watched with pleasure the astonishment and delight in Dick's face, as she seated him before such a breakfast as he had not seen for many a year. One question followed another until Miss Margery had the whole story.

"Just tell me where you live," she said as he finished. "I'm coming down there to-night to see Norah about you."

Then stuffing his pockets with good things for Bessie, and hunting up the warmest pair of gloves she owned for his red, chapped hands, she sent him home the happiest boy in the city.

She was as good as her word, and before she slept she sought Norah's miserable home. It was in a part of the city she had never visited before, and it hardly seemed safe for a lady to go there alone in the evening; but Miss Margery was never one of the timid kind, and indeed, it would have been a bold man who would have molested her after one glance at the snapping gray eyes and set lips.

The rooms, reeking with the odor of soapsuds, tobacco and drink, were almost too much for Miss Margery's refined taste; but for the sake of the children she remained long enough to learn all she wished from Norah and the half-drunken Mike.

Little Bessie, notwithstanding her soiled, ragged gown, seemed like some fair white flower growing in a heap of filth. She crept confidingly into Miss Margery's lap, and the first touch of maternal love the lonely woman had ever known awakened at the pressure of the little one's head against her breast.

"Come to me early to-morrow morning," she said to Dick as she kissed Bessie good-night and went out into the clear, cold air, which seemed doubly refreshing after the vile odors she had been inhaling for the last fifteen minutes. When she reached her bright, warm rooms she threw aside her outdoor wrappings, and drawing her easy-chair before the glowing fire, fell into a reverie such as she seldom indulged in.

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For twenty years she had lived on this corner in a quiet part of the city, working busily at her trade of dressmaking, which, with her economical habits, furnished her a comfortable support, and a few hundred a year laid by for her "old-age fund," as she called it. Since her mother's death, five years before, she had lived alone except an occasional visitor, and, like all middle-aged people living a solitary life, she had become confirmed in her own peculiar habits until the thought of any one else sharing her home became distasteful to her. Yet Miss Margery was naturally a social woman, and at times when her work-girls left her, and she settled down to her quiet evenings, she felt a little lonely, and the thought of some one to share her pleasant home did occasionally enter her mind; but when her friends advised matrimony Miss Margery always assured them she wouldn't marry the best man in the world.

So Miss Margery lived alone and petted her sleek, plump, old Maltese cat, for a woman must have something to love, and some one has said that when a woman has no husband she loves the next most treacherous thing—a cat. But treacherous or not, Miss Margery was very fond of her docile old Tommy, who always dozed quietly through the day while she was at work, but the moment she was alone set up a claim to the caresses which usually were lavishly bestowed upon him. But to-night he purred and rubbed against her unnoticed.

"Perhaps it would be better to trust the future a little more in the Lord's hands," she said. "What do you think about it, Tom?" responding at last to the cat's mute caresses. But Tom only winked his great solemn eyes and curled himself up contentedly in her lap.

"Yes, I'm going to do it, Tom," she said emphatically, as the clock struck ten, and she put Tom softly down and made her preparations for bed. But what she was going to do remained a complete mystery.

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The next morning Dick was on hand at an early hour, and Miss Margery entered heartily into his plans for getting the doll. She would buy the finest one she could find in the city for fifty cents; Dick would have the pleasure of paying for it; then she would dress it with the nicest pieces she could find in her silk-bag, and the next day—Christmas—he might bring Bessie to her house and they would present it to her; then both of them must stay to dinner with her. Dick went home as if walking on air. Was there ever so happy a boy as he? Just as he left, Miss Margery gave him a note for Norah. He wondered a little what it was about, and almost hoped it was not to invite Norah to come to dinner with them. Then he reproached himself. Norah used to be good to them before she married Mike. But now—well, he wasn't going to think any more about it. Bessie was to have the doll and they were to have a Christmas dinner in Miss Margery's bright little rooms. What more could any one ask for?

In response to that mysterious missive Norah called upon Miss Margery that evening, and they had a long talk which seemed very satisfactory to both, and Miss Margery did some strange shopping after Norah left; then sat up half the night sewing on some very mysterious garments. Precisely at ten o'clock—the hour set—Dick and Bessie were at Miss Margery's door. Dick had hardly been able to wait so long, his joy was so great, and Bessie's questions had been hard to answer without betraying his secret.

Miss Margery was as smiling and happy as the children when she met them; she looked ten years younger than the fretted, careworn woman of two days before. There was a cheery "Merry Christmas!" all around; then Miss Margery gave both the little ones a generous bowl of warm milk and bread, "to stay their stomachs," as she said, until dinner was ready.

These disposed of she led Dick into her warm bedroom, and, pointing to a full suit of clothing spread upon the bed, said briskly: "Now, Dick, just slip off those old clothes; give yourself a good wash here," pointing toward a bowl of warm water, soap and towels on the stand, "then dress yourself in these while I'm doing the same by Bessie."

In open-eyed wonder Dick proceeded to obey; he found everything complete, shoes, stockings and all, even to a neat white handkerchief in his pocket. Fifteen minutes later he came out of the bedroom so completely transformed that even Miss Margery hardly knew him. And Bessie had undergone a no less marvelous change.

Miss Margery looked from one to the other, and it would be hard to tell which wore the happiest face.

Dick looked himself over in the mirror, from his collar and tie down to his neatly-fitting shoes, then walked back and forth for a minute with his shoulders squared and his head thrown back, a look of sturdy manliness in his face, which gave Miss Margery more pleasure than the most voluble thanks.

Bessie stood still, looking in the mirror with round, open eyes, as if she couldn't understand how it could be her own self; then rising on the tips of her toes she craned her neck to look over her shoulder at the back of the pretty frock; then she put out one foot to see her bright-colored stockings and shiny shoes.

"Oh!" she said at last, "it's booful! Why, Dickie, I's jest like a dollie, isn't I?"

"You are a dollie!" Miss Margery cried, catching her up and kissing her. "Just the sweetest little dollie in the world! But see here, what Dick has brought you."

She placed the child in an easy-chair and brought out the long-coveted doll, and handed it to Dick. She had added another fifty cents to Dick's money in buying the doll, and then dressed it in the prettiest fabrics her piece-bag afforded. Dick looked at it in astonishment and delight, and could say only, "Oh, Miss Margery, how beautiful!" as he laid it in Bessie's arms.

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"Oh, a dollie, a dollie! A real dollie!" Bessie cried in ecstasy, hugging it up to her and laying her cheeks against its head. "Oh! oh! it's so booful, it's so booful! Did Dod send it?" she asked with wide-open, solemn eyes.

"Yes, dear!" Miss Margery said softly, with tears brimming her eyes. "I think God helped Dick to buy it and me to dress it. I don't believe we should have done it if He had not answered your prayer by putting it into our hearts to do so; do you, Dick?"

"No, ma'am, I'm sure the Lord must have sent me to you."

Bessie clasped her dear little hands together, and, lifting her eyes, said reverently, "Tank 'ou, dear Dod, for my Kismus pesent."

"And you never thought of having a Christmas present for yourself, Dick?"

"Why, no, ma'am, I'm sure it's present enough to see Bessie so happy; besides, I have these new clothes; I think they are a splendid present; I couldn't have wished for anything nicer."

"Not even these?" and Miss Margery produced a bright-painted sled with "Bessie" in large letters on it, and a fine ball, which made Dick's eyes open wide in surprise and delight.

"Oh, Miss Margery! you're the best woman in the world!" was all Dick could say. Miss Margery only laughed, and taking Bessie in her arms she drew Dick to her side with her other arm around him.

"Now you have both a Christmas present, I want to show you mine," she said, with just a little quiver in her voice.

"What is it?" Dick asked, looking around.

"Right here!" Miss Margery answered, tightening her clasp on both the children. "Just you and Bessie. Norah has given you to me, and you are to stay with me always, and be my little boy and girl."

For a moment Dick was speechless, then he drew his slender form to its full height and threw back his head with manliness.

"I'll be just as good a boy as I know how to be," he said, with tears in his eyes, in spite of all his assumed manliness. "And when I'm a man I'll work and take care of both you and Bessie."

"I believe you will, Dick," Miss Margery said softly. "I think it will prove the best investment I ever made."

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Bessie had been so absorbed in her dollie that she paid no attention to what had been said; she was holding it snugged tightly in her arms, crooning a soft little lullaby as she rocked to and fro.

"Do you hear, Bessie?" Dick asked, laying his hand on her shoulder. "We are to stay here always!"

"And not go back to Mike any more?"

"Not any more, ever!"

"And can I play wif my dollie ev'ry day?" Just then that was of more importance than even being forever rid of Mike.

"Yes, and you can have a new one when that is worn out."

"Oh, Mit Margey!" Bessie said, scrambling to her feet and throwing one arm around Miss Margery's neck, while the other held fast to the precious dollie. "I fink 'ou's 'e goodest woman in 'e whole world, and I loves 'ou a whole bushel!"

And Miss Margery, crying and laughing together, declared it was the happiest day of her whole life, and I think she had the best Christmas present after all.

The Earnings of an Actress

TRIALS AND STRUGGLES OF STAGE LIFE

By Grace Esther Drew

AT THIS time there are many young girls of good education and parentage looking with longing eyes toward the stage as a profession, and I think it is fitting that they should know something about the disagreeable side of the profession: the pleasant side is more apparent to an outsider. Many girls who find themselves obliged to earn their own living, look to the stage as the easiest and pleasantest means of obtaining a livelihood. Yet experience and observation tell me that it is practically impossible for a novice to earn money enough to support herself. In these days it is more important that a woman should have a pleasing appearance than that she be possessed of talent.

Twenty-five or thirty years ago it was required that an applicant for a stage position must know something of acting, for the productions in those days were given with limited effects in the way of scenery and costume. Now, every new play is heralded as having the most "splendid scenery and expensive costumes," and though few people outside of the profession know it, the actors—except in an opera company—pay for these "expensive costumes" themselves. Upon the merits of a play as a spectacle depends much of its success with the theatre-going public.

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Last season there was hardly a successful play outside of farce-comedy or comedy-drama. The Shakespearian dramas, or those which touched the feelings deeply, were unsuccessful in New York and on the road, even when interpreted by artists. The explanation is that the lives of most men and women are kept at such a tension during business and some so-called "social" hours that they seek, and probably require, amusement when there is a chance for relaxation. Their brains refuse to work, and demand mere entertainment. There is, therefore, little to encourage a serious study and preparation for artistic work on the part of an aspirant. While the public demands a spectacle, the manager, who is a speculator and not an educator, seeks to supply the demand. "Popular" stories are written to fill this requirement, and the writer, who longs to do something great, finds he must please the public fancy rather than seek to engage the public head, if he would make both ends meet. The actor is forced to recognize the fact that if he can and will do something peculiar, walk up a ladder backward, or dance eccentrically, he will be well rewarded. The same is true of a woman.

Such things are not encouraging to the actress who is eager to do the best work she is capable of, but they are facts. Perhaps the managers are to blame only in an intermediate sense, for they merely endeavor to give the public what it asks for, as shown by what it applauds most, and what it pays its money to witness. And the managers are in the business to make money, not to cultivate the public taste. The reason why a woman is handicapped at the very outset of her career is that she is not paid enough to support herself. There are so many eager to "act" that they are willing to accept very little if any salary to begin with, and they furnish their own wardrobe, and pay all expenses. Many vain women are delighted to be thought "actresses" (I don't know why), and there are probably women of talent who offer their services for a very small sum. The public is just as well pleased with the actress who receives no salary, if she is pretty and dresses well, as with the girl who is trying to eke out a living upon the pittance which she receives; so why should a manager not employ the one who is the least expense to him?

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I am stating a strange fact, but it is true that the New York stock company, into which admittance is most eagerly sought, pays frequently but six dollars a week to beginners, never more than fifteen dollars. Yet there is a clause in the contract in which the "undersigned" promises to dress well "on and off the stage." Think! Dress well on and off the stage on six dollars a week. Besides the expenses of "dressing," there are, of course, living and incidental expenses: board being at least eight dollars a week in a comfortable place. A novice in any of the stock companies is never paid more than fifteen dollars a week. The beginner may not have a line to speak, or she may play the part of the maid, with, perhaps, a dozen words to say during the evening. If she is one of the "ladies and gentlemen" who are on in a ballroom scene, she must furnish a suitable dress. Such a costume (including gloves and shoes) might cost almost any amount; it could hardly be made in the most economical way for less than fifty dollars; and managers rarely advance salary to actors, while the costumer would as soon think of throwing his money into the fire as to "trust" an actor to pay for a costume after he has it once in his trunk. For he knows that whatever the good intentions of the player, the chances are against a successful season. But suppose the actor manages to get the money in some way, the play runs only a few weeks, and another complete costume is required! During the second year's engagement the salary is twenty-five or thirty dollars, and the actress may have a small ingenue part to play, necessitating the purchase of three or four expensive dresses.

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A leading woman receives from seventy-five to one hundred and twenty-five dollars per week, and if she has a desire to live at all "stylishly" (and it is part of her business to do so) she cannot possibly pay her expenses. She is expected to wear exceptionally elegant costumes on the stage, and her appearance on the street is of great importance to her. The woman who engages with a Shakespearian "repertoire" company must have a wardrobe furnished by a professional costumer. Last season an actress of wide reputation, who was chosen to play leading parts with such a company, and whose wardrobe cost fifteen hundred dollars, did not earn enough the entire season to pay for it. The tour was disastrous financially, and was cut short, as was that of several hundred other companies which were obliged to close, in many cases far from home. Sometimes the people were left to get back to New York as best they could.

The chorus girls in a comic opera are paid from twelve to twenty dollars per week, and more according to their figures than voices. They do not furnish their own costumes. A very popular singer receives from one hundred and fifty to three hundred dollars per week.

There are ten thousand actors and actresses in this country. Four thousand were out of work last season, while many more had only a quarter or half season's engagement. I cannot see how a woman can succeed on the stage who has not an income aside from that she obtains by her work.

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When the Nile Overflows

MAJESTIC GLORIES OF THE FLOOD

THE tourist who only comes to Egypt to shun "winter and foul weather" knows nothing of the majestic glories of the Nile flood. The ancient Nilometer at the south end of the Island of Roda, just above Cairo, says a writer in Nature, is one of the most interesting sights of the place. The water enters from the river by a culvert into a well about eighteen feet square, with a graduated stone pillar in the centre. On each side of the well is a recess about six feet wide and three feet deep, surmounted by a pointed arch, over which is carved in relief a Kufic inscription, and a similar inscription is carried all around the well, consisting of verses of the Koran. A staircase goes down the well, from the steps of which the initiated may read the height of the water on the pillar. The Nilometer dates from A. D. 861, and in Cairo may be found the daily record for one thousand years.

I need hardly tell you that when our English engineers took the river in hand, we established a number of gauges at Wadi Halfa, Assuan, Cairo, and many other points, on more scientific principles than the venerable Nilometer of the Roda Island. After the river has begun to rise, its height is daily chanted through the Cairo streets until it reaches sixteen cubits on the gauge. At this point the Khalig el Masri, the old canal that flows through the heart of Cairo, is opened—up to this point it is dry, and full or empty it is little more than a sanitary abomination at present; but in former days it occupied an important place, and when the Nile water was high enough to flow down its bed, it was looked on that the flood had fairly set in, and that the kindly fruits of the earth might be duly expected. The head of this canal is on the right bank of the river, just south of Cairo. The water enters a channel some thirty feet wide, with a high wall on its left and a sloping bank on its right or southern flank. The water then flows under the pointed arch of an old stone bridge. The bed of the canal is cleared so that it would flow in at a gauge of about fourteen and a half cubits, but an earthen bank is thrown across it four feet higher.

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There is no more interesting ceremony in Egypt than the annual cutting of the Khalig, as the opening ceremony is called. It takes place between August 5 and August 15. Days before preparations are being made for the festival. Tents with innumerable lamps are placed along the wall on the one side. Frames for all manner of fireworks are erected on the sand-bank on the other side. All the notables are there in full uniform or in canonicals—the Khedive himself, or his representative, the Sheikh ul Islam (the highest dignitary of the Mohammedan faith), the Sheikh el Bekri, the Sheikh es Sadát, all the learned scribes of the great university of the Azhár, the cabinet ministers and undersecretaries, the Sirder of the army and his staff, the judges, and the financiers. The Egyptian troops are turned out, salutes are fired, and about eight o'clock in the warm summer night the classes all assemble under the gayly-lighted tents, and the masses crowd round the frames for the fireworks.

Out in the river, just opposite the canal's mouth, is moored an old hulk of a certain seagoing outline, which has been towed up from Bulak during the day, and is an emblem of the time when the great republic of Venice sent an envoy to witness the ceremony. This boat is full of lamps, and fireworks, too. As the night deepens the excitement increases. The populace on the bridge and the opposite bank are shouting, yelling, and dancing wildly round the fireworks. On the other side are the gay uniforms and lighted tents, whence we can look over the wall down on the dark water, where you see brown figures plunging in waist-deep and digging with their hoes at the embankment that blocks the canal's mouth. Long before midnight the fireworks have gone out and left the splendid stars to themselves; the grandees have all gone to bed, but the people keep up the revelry, and in the morning, by half-past seven o'clock, every one has come back. Then but little of the bank is left uncut, and a few more strokes of the big hoes will do it, and the brown skins and the brown water reflect the bright sunlight from above. Then the Sheikh ul Islam solemnly thanks the Almighty, Allah the All-Powerful, the All-Merciful. He implores his blessing on the flood, and at a signal the bank is cut, the waters rush in, and with them a crowd of swimmers. A bag of piastres is scattered among them, and the ceremony ends.

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With a Telephone in His Hat

LAWYER LAFLIN MILLS, of Chicago, says the Electrical Review, is the author of a very ingenious scheme, involving the use of the telephone in a silk hat, by which he secured certain direct evidence he desired. Two or three weeks ago Mr. Mills received a call from Dr. Peter Janss, who desired professional assistance. A man, who had not been extremely careful to conceal his identity, had been writing letters to Mrs. Janss. This man, he said, was a lawyer named Charles Ioas, with whom Dr. Janss was for some years intimate, but with whom he had a disagreement over a year ago. Soon after the alienation began, Warren Inslow, a clerk in Dr. Janss' office, received a typewritten letter, signed "Thomas Jefferson," requesting him to hand an inclosed note to Mrs. Janss. As the writer said: "Do not let the Doctor see it; it's about girls." Winslow, therefore, handed the letter and the inclosure to Dr. Janss, instead of Mrs. Janss. Dr. Janss suspected Ioas at once, and went straight to him and accused him of it. Ioas boldly admitted it and defied Janss.

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Mr. Mills decided at once that additional evidence against Ioas would be necessary before it would be wise to make an arrest. He called in Post-Office Inspector Stuart, and the practicability of proving the crime by comparing it with other work done on Ioas' typewriter was discussed. This plan was abandoned, and then Mr. Mills suggested the use of a telephone to get additional evidence of Ioas' confession. Subsequently, Mr. Mills consulted with his friend, J. P. Ellicott, an electrician, and a line of procedure was soon agreed upon. Dr. Janss was having occasional interviews with Ioas, in which Ioas would confess his authorship of the letter, but he was careful not to do so in the hearing of any third party. It was decided, therefore, to conceal a telephone on Dr. Janss' person, by means of which a third party at a distance could hear Ioas' confessions.

After discussing the cuff button, the necktie, and other parts of a man's attire as the best hiding-place for a transmitter, it was finally decided to conceal it in the crown of Dr. Janss' silk hat. The hat was provided with two crowns, and the transmitter put between them. The outer crown had through it a few eyelet holes for admitting sound. A battery was arranged for the coat-pocket.

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The wire was a hundred feet in length, and consisted of two fine copper twin conductors. The wire was attached to the transmitter in the hat, passed down the Doctor's neck to the battery, and thence down his trousers leg to the heel of his shoe. When he next visited Ioas he was accompanied by Inspector Stuart and Detective Sandemeier. As he passed into the office Detective Sandemeier fastened the coil to the heel and unreeled the wire into a neighboring office. There Inspector Stuart connected it with the receiver and held the receiver to his ear. Ioas conducted Dr. Janss through several rooms, closing the doors as they passed, before he would talk. He did this without noticing the wire trailing at the Doctor's heel. Then he talked long, loud, and freely—right into the hat which Janss held in his lap—and boasted, as before, that he had written the letter. The conversation lasted an hour, and Stuart took notes. As they came out Ioas discovered the wire, saw at once what was up, and immediately followed its course until he came to Stuart. But the Inspector had already detached the receiver and looked innocent.

But Stuart afterward confronted Ioas and read from a paper all that he had said to Dr. Janss. Ioas broke down and confessed everything to the Inspector. The result of this was that United States Commissioner Wirt held Ioas to the grand jury in bonds of $1500.

Science in a Nutshell

THE eleven cables now in operation across the Atlantic have cost upward of $70,000,000.

THE huge guns of modern navies can be fired only seventy-five times, when they become worn out.

IF THE earth were equally divided among its inhabitants, each person would get about twenty-three and a half acres.

PLATINUM has been drawn into smooth wire so fine that it could not be distinguished by the naked eye, even when stretched across a piece of white cardboard.

A Swiss scientist has been testing the presence of bacteria in mountain air, and finds that not a single microbe exists beyond an altitude of 2000 feet above sea level.

THE diatoms, single-celled plants of the seaweed family, are so small that three thousand of them laid end to end scarcely suffice to cover an inch of space on the rule.

TECHNICALLY, any inhabitant of the United Kingdom is liable to be called upon to undertake the uncongenial task of hangman. The salary is five dollars a week as a retaining fee, and ten dollars after an execution.

THE smallest city in the world is the miniature place known as Seward City, Alaska, its three inhabitants being, respectively, Mayor, Chairman of the Board of Aldermen, and the President of the Common Council.

IT IS said that land-crabs of the West Indies once every year leave their native home in multitudes, and in regular order march down to the sea, passing over, and not around, any and every obstacle that may come in the way.

IT IS not generally known that, size for size, a thread of spider silk is decidedly tougher than a bar of steel. An ordinary thread will bear a weight of three grains. This is just about fifty per cent. stronger than a steel thread of the same thickness.

NONE can tell where the diamond goes to in combustion. Burn it, and it leaves no ash; the flame is exterior, like that of a cork, and when it has blazed itself out, there remains not even so much as would dust the antennæ of a butterfly.

THE rabbit is able to bear the greatest cold. A French professor shut a rabbit up all night in a block of ice, and the next morning the animal seemed to be very comfortable and not to know that anything unusual had been going on.

THE lines of no two human hands are exactly alike. When a traveler in China desires a passport, the palm of the hand is covered with fine oil-paint, and an impression is taken on thin, damp paper. This paper, officially signed, is his passport.

THE most remarkable whirlpool is the maelstrom of the northwest coast of Norway and southwest of Moskenaesol, the most southerly of the Lofoden Isles. It was once supposed to be unfathomable, but the depth has been shown not to exceed twenty fathoms.

ANATOMISTS, to separate the bones of a skull, frequently fill it with small beans and place the whole in a basin of water. The beans swell and slowly split the skull. The force which beans are capable of exerting under these conditions is equal to the average pressure in the boiler of a steam engine.

THE longest bridge in the world is the Lion Bridge, near Saugang, China. It extends five and a quarter miles over an arm of the Yellow Sea, and it is supported by three hundred huge stone arches. The roadway, seventy feet above the water, is inclosed in an iron network. A marble lion, twenty-one feet long, rests on the crown of every pillar.

THE tunnel at Schemnitz, Hungary, is the longest in the world. It has a length of 10.27 miles, costing over $5,000,000 to construct. Completed in the year 1888, it was commenced in the eighteenth century. According to the original contract, thirty-five dollars a lineal yard was to be paid, but one hundred and twenty dollars a yard was paid toward its completion.

PROFESSOR CROOKS thinks that if the electric lights were universal to-day, the candle, if suddenly introduced, would be thought a wonderful invention, as it enables a person to obtain light in its simplest and most portable form, and without the use of cumbrous machinery or the necessity of attaching the lamp to any fixed point by means of wire before it could be lighted.

IT IS not every one who is aware that a Bank of England note is not of the same thickness all through. The paper is thicker in the left-hand corner, to enable it to retain a keener impression of the vignette there, and it is also considerably thicker in the dark shadows of the centre letters and beneath the figures at the ends. Counterfeit notes are invariably of one thickness only throughout.

ALUMINUM neckties have been introduced into Germany. They are really made of the cosmopolitan metal, and frosted or otherwise ornamented in various shapes imitating the ordinary silk or satin article. They are fastened to the collar button or by a band around the neck, and are particularly recommended for summer wear, since they can be easily cleaned when soiled, while they are not perceptibly heavier than cotton, cambric or silk.

By Special Messenger to Africa

THE MINES IN THE TRANSVAAL

By Charles D. Leslie

WHEN Pepworth Tring, the well-known South African millionaire, sent for me, and after inquiring if I was at liberty for a few weeks, said that he was about to commission me to take a small map to his Johannesburg representative, I was rather surprised that he should go to the expense of a special messenger from London when the postal service was available, and I said:

"It seems a very simple undertaking."

But he speedily enlightened me.

"Ah, that's where you are wrong," he replied, giving me a shrewd glance. "In this case the post is not to be trusted, and an unscrupulous enemy will strain every nerve to defeat my intention."

My present employer, a well-known Kimberley man, who had lately turned his attention to the Witwatersrandt Gold Mines, was middle-aged—about fifty—but looked more, owing to the hard and adventurous life he had led. His tanned, weather-beaten face appeared commonplace enough, but behind the small, steady gray eyes lay a quick brain and unerring judgment. Few, indeed, could boast with any degree of truth on ever having got the better of Pepworth Tring. As a judge of diamonds, also, he had barely an equal. All this I know from common hearsay.

"You anticipate there will be an attempt to rob me during the journey?"

"I am quite sure of it. The matter on the face of it is simple enough. This map"—(he held up a small piece of parchment a few square inches in size—it appeared to represent the course of a river, some red crosses were marked on one portion, and some lines of writing ran along the bottom)—"has to be given to Mr. Howard, of Fox Street, Johannesburg. There your mission ends. But whether you will be able to accomplish it is another matter. Gibson, my old partner, is determined to obtain possession of this map by some means; he is rich, unscrupulous, and can command the services of men even more unscrupulous than himself. This is the reason I do not trust the post. The corruption prevalent among all Boer officials extends to the post-office; my letters have been opened. He has creatures there in his employ. You must trust no one, and conceal the paper so that it cannot be found."

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"But while on board the ship it would surely be better to intrust it to the captain or purser?"

"That would be risky, and only postpone their attack on you. If you received the map back safely you would, without doubt, be robbed of it between Capetown and Johannesburg. No; when the boat reaches Capetown they must be under the impression that you are not the bearer."

"When am I to leave?"

"The 'Roman' leaves the docks to-morrow. Your berth is booked; Gibson is also a passenger, and several of his following. But, perhaps, I had better explain why this map is so important.

"Gibson, like myself, is an old Kimberley man. We both did very well there, and lately, like me, he has been dealing in Transvaal mining property. We have often gone partners in various undertakings. In the autumn of '94, being then in Johannesburg—about six months ago—and feeling the want of a holiday, I determined to go on a shooting expedition through the Transvaal toward the sea. Accompanied by two Zulus, I carried out my intention, and after some weeks' traveling we found ourselves in the low-country bordering on Swaziland. Here, quite by chance, I made a remarkable discovery. In the dried-up channel of what had been a river I came upon traces of diamonds. The find to my eyes was most promising; but before I could pursue my investigations further, one of my Zulus, dispatched to get food from a neighboring kraal, came hot-foot with the news that the Swazis were up in arms. Irritated by some act of Boer oppression, they seemed inclined to wreak their vengeance on me, and so we fled forthwith for our very lives. Before leaving, I drew up a plan of the place, so that it could be found again when it was so desired.

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"After various adventures I reached Durban, and took ship for home. Meeting Gibson in the city, I acquainted him in general terms with my discovery, stating that in the course of my journeying I had found diamonds. I had intended to take him into partnership in this affair, but the knowledge which I gained immediately afterward, that he had swindled me in the matter of some gold mines, changed my purpose, and I broke with him for good.

"Now the value of my find is problematical. Diamonds have not yet been found in paying quantity in the Transvaal. This place may be a second Kimberley, and shake the De Beers monopoly. It is quite possible. Therefore, I want the ground pegged out in the usual way, and to register myself as the owner; but if Gibson could get hold of the map he would forestall me. It is not convenient for me to go myself just now, as I have some important business in hand; so not to delay obtaining the claims, I have ordered Howard to peg them out and register in my name, but he can do nothing until he has the particulars contained in this. Now, do you understand?"

"Yes; but how far is Gibson cognizant of your plans?"

"He has found out that I intend sending the map immediately to Johannesburg. This office is watched; you will be shadowed on leaving, and when they find that you are a passenger by the 'Roman' they will conclude that you are my messenger. It will be your business to nullify that belief."

"I see."

"You had better pretend to be a new sub-manager sent out by me to represent my interests in Johannesburg. Now, can you, do you think, conceal the map in such a way that these thieves cannot get hold of it?"

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I sat silent a few moments thinking over the situation, then my eyes strayed to some books lying on the table between us. I took up one of them. It was Lock on Gold, a standard work.

"I will do my best," I said at length.

"Trust no one," concluded my employer, giving me money for my journey, and the boat ticket. "Rely on yourself alone. Put the map in your breast-pocket for the present, but find a securer hiding-place before you go on board. Good-by, and good luck to you."

My preparations were soon made, and the following morning found me on board the "Roman." I had reduced my luggage to as small a compass as possible. It consisted of two small portmanteaus which would go under my bunk, some wraps, and a few novels, with Lock on Gold, the latter obtained from my employer to sustain my character as a mining manager, and with its covers encased in gray calico. I had joined the ship at the docks. There were two other men in my cabin, for the ship was full, every berth being taken, but they had not yet come on board, so I arranged my belongings at leisure, and then went on deck as we left the dock to smoke, and view the river, and the miles of wharves and shipping, as we slowly and majestically steamed out to sea. The ship was nearly empty, and I passed a quiet twenty-four hours anticipating the coming duel which was to take place, and wondering if my simple scheme would be successful.

The mail-bags and passengers came on board at Plymouth, and a scene of animation and confusion followed; but a rough sea and head wind calmed the exuberance of many of the company, and the dinner-tables in the saloon that evening showed an abundance of empty seats. Both my cabin mates succumbed, and I left them white and groaning. Fortunately, I was a good sailor; and, having enjoyed my dinner, later in the evening found myself in the smoking-room smoking one of Gibson's cigars, and engaged in a chat with that worthy, who was most friendly, and evinced some curiosity about myself.

I told my tale, which he accepted, with, perhaps, suspicious readiness.

"Employed by Tring, are you? Peppery fellow; I know him well. We used to be friends; now he hates me like poison."

He introduced me to his friends, Spellman, Dunbarton and Vandermit, who severally expressed themselves delighted to make my acquaintance.

The first two or three days my adversaries only skirmished, tried to pump me, and dropped broad hints as to the advantages which would follow if I joined them—hints which I completely ignored.

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As, however, they felt pretty sure that I was the bearer of the coveted map, my portmanteaus were searched more than once, and my spare clothes, when I was absent from my cabin. It was Spellman who was told off for this portion of the quest; finding I was not very cordial toward him, he struck up a friendship for one of my cabin mates, which gave him an excuse for entering at all hours. I did not think it advisable to enlighten the latter, as my attitude was to blandly ignore my adversaries' behavior.

Spellman's researches proving of no avail, the great endeavor to discover if I had the paper took place about a week after Madeira was passed. I was playing in a whist tournament, and noticed that Dunbarton and Vandermit were playing nap with the two men who shared my cabin. I guessed that Spellman was making a thorough search, and as soon as I was at liberty I hurried there.

It had indeed been thorough. Every article had been taken out of the portmanteaus and examined, and the portmanteaus themselves cut and hacked in search of a secret hiding-place. Everything had been scrutinized; even the gray calico cover pulled off Lock to make sure that nothing was between it and the binding. Nor was this all, for while I surveyed the wreck I became conscious of an overpowering feeling of drowsiness, and knowledge came to me that I had been drugged. Too late I remembered having accepted a drink from Gibson; but I had only sense enough left to tumble into my bunk before falling into a heavy sleep.

They no doubt searched me to the skin that night, for I slept as the dead; but though I woke next morning with a bad headache, I felt well pleased, for no result had rewarded their toil. Of course, I made a fuss as to the conduct of some mysterious thieves, who had not even spared the lining of my boots, and certain inquiries were instituted which came to nothing. I innocently complained to Gibson, and there apparently the matter ended, for I was molested no more.

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I felt that I had won, as I saw by my enemies' manner that they had decided they were mistaken in imagining I had the map; but great cautiousness was still necessary till the journey's end. "Never crow before you are out of the wood" is an excellent piece of advice. Still, feeling that the worst was over, a sense of calm possessed me as I lounged in my chair, under the shade of the awning, for the tropical sun was very sultry, and made iced drinks a necessity.

Gibson continued good friends with me, and often came and chatted as I languidly studied Lock on Gold in my deck-chair. As a practical mineralogist, he pointed out the best parts to study, and I imbibed much information valuable enough had I designed to turn miner. He was an amusing man, and his creed simple enough—"Get money, honestly if you can; but get money."

It was four o'clock on a Tuesday afternoon when we reached Capetown, and Gibson managed to get away by that evening's train, leaving two of his followers to bring his baggage on the next day, when the rest of the passengers bound for the Rand traveled.

The third morning after landing found me in Fox Street, Johannesburg, seeking Howard's office. I had just seen the name on the window, and had ascended the steps to the door of the building, when a passer-by pulled up on recognizing me. It was Gibson.

"Hallo! where are you off to now?"

The time for caution was passed, victory was mine, and I could safely enjoy my triumph. I surveyed the baffled financier with a smile of infinite satisfaction, and replied:

"I am the bearer of a certain document from Mr. Tring to Mr. Howard."

From the expression on my face and the accent on my words, he read the truth, and knew that I had baffled him, and his face changed. Words failed him, for he was taken quite by surprise, and bewilderment rendered him speechless.

Enjoying his discomfiture for a few seconds, I turned and went in the building, leaving him on the pavement below, the most unhappy man in Johannesburg.

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Having entered the outer office and given my name to a clerk, I was speedily shown into Mr. Howard's private room. He greeted me warmly, and in the same breath inquired if I had been successful. I said I had.

"That's good news. I've just got my mail and heard of your coming. Look—you see; the envelope has been tampered with! You are sure Gibson hasn't set eyes on the map?"

"Absolutely," I replied, then gave him a short account of the efforts made to secure it.

"Ay, ay, they wouldn't stick at much; you're fortunate to get here with a whole skin. But where is it after all?"

In answer I produced Lock on Gold, and taking my penknife, cut off the gray calico cover, which I had put on again after it had been pulled off. Then inserting the point into the cover itself, I cut it open. There, snugly concealed, lay the precious map. I had, before leaving home, cut the cover open with a sharp knife, and placing the map in between, glued up the edges with great care. Being unable to absolutely conceal the fact that the cover had been cut, I had put the calico cover over, and when it had been torn off by the searcher he never noticed the binding itself had been cut.

With the knowledge gained by the map, Howard took steps which very shortly made the land where Pepworth Tring found diamonds the property of that worthy, and I know no more, as nothing further has been heard of the discovery—no company has been publicly formed to work it. But I have a strong idea that the find turned out well.

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In the Land of Metaphor

THE most populous country is Oblivion.
Many go there; few return.
The largest river is Time.
The deepest ocean is Death.
The most highly civilized land is To-day.
The region where no man hath ever set foot is called To-morrow.
The region where no living thing hath habitation is called Yesterday.
The highest mountain is called Success. Few reach the top save those who watch sharply for the passing of the spirit of the mountain, Opportunity, who carries upward all those that seize hold upon him the instant he comes for them.
The greatest desert is called Life, and it hath many oases. These are called Hope, and Ambition, and Love, and Charity, and Home. And of them all the last is most beautiful. Besides these are many others, smaller in extent, whence the traveler obtaineth refreshment during life's journey

Quaint and Curious

At an Antiquarian Banquet

THIS unique and select feast, says Harper's Bazar, was given more than twenty years ago at Brussels, by a resident of that city, himself an antiquarian. Only six guests were invited, one of them an American, from whom, as then published, is derived this brief account. So dainty a bill-of-fare can never be repeated. There were apples grown more than eighteen hundred years ago, and for this modern entertainment taken from an earthen jar rescued from the ruins of Pompeii. Bread was offered made from wheat found in a chamber of one of the pyramids, and raised before the children of Israel passed through the Red Sea; butter, churned when Queen Bess occupied England's throne-chair, was taken from an earthen crock found on a stone shelf, where for centuries it had been preserved in icy water in one of the wonderful deep wells of Scotland; and wine, "long mellowing through the lapse of years" in a secret vault in the city of Corinth, as far back, so it was affirmed, as the fifteenth century. At this unparalleled array of dainties each guest had a bit of bread, a sip of wine, of butter as much as desired, and the jar of canned apples was freely circulated.

* * *

Curiosities of Words

THERE are two words in the whole range of the English language containing all the vowels in their regular order. They are abstemious and facetious. The following words each have them in irregular order: Authoritative, disadvantageous, encouraging, efficacious, instantaneous, importunate, mendacious, nefarious, precarious, pertinacious, sacrilegious, simultaneous, tenacious, unintentional, unobjectionable, unequivocal, undiscoverable, and vexatious. It is usually said that there are but seven nine-lettered monosyllable words in English, *viz.*: Scratched, stretched, scrunched, scranched, screeched, squelched, and staunched.

Here are some of the shortest sentences into which the alphabet can be compressed: "J. Gray, pack with my box five dozen quills," thirty-three letters. "Quack, glad zephyr, waft my javelin-box," thirty-one letters. "Phiz, styx, wrong, buck flame, quib," twenty-six letters. "I, quartz pyx, who fling muck-beds," twenty-six letters. "Fritz! quick! land! hew gypsum box," twenty-six letters. "Dumpty quiz! whirl back fogs next," twenty-seven letters. "Export my fund. Quiz black whigs," twenty-six letters. "Get nymph, quiz and brow, fix luck," twenty-six letters. In more sober English, the last one would be, "Marry, be cheerful, watch your business." These sentences would make excellent writing-copies, for they secure attention to every letter, and profitable exercises for learners of the typewriter.

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Philadelphia

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STATE OF OHIO, CITY OF TOLEDO, } ss.
LUCAS COUNTY,

FRANK J. CHENEY makes oath that he is the senior partner of the firm of F. J. CHENEY & Co., doing business in the City of Toledo, County and State aforesaid, and that said firm will pay the sum of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS for each and every case of CATARRH that cannot be cured by the use of HALL'S CATARRH CURE.

FRANK J. CHENEY.

Sworn to before me and subscribed in my presence, this 6th day of December, A.D. 1886.

{SEAL} A. W. GLEASON,
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